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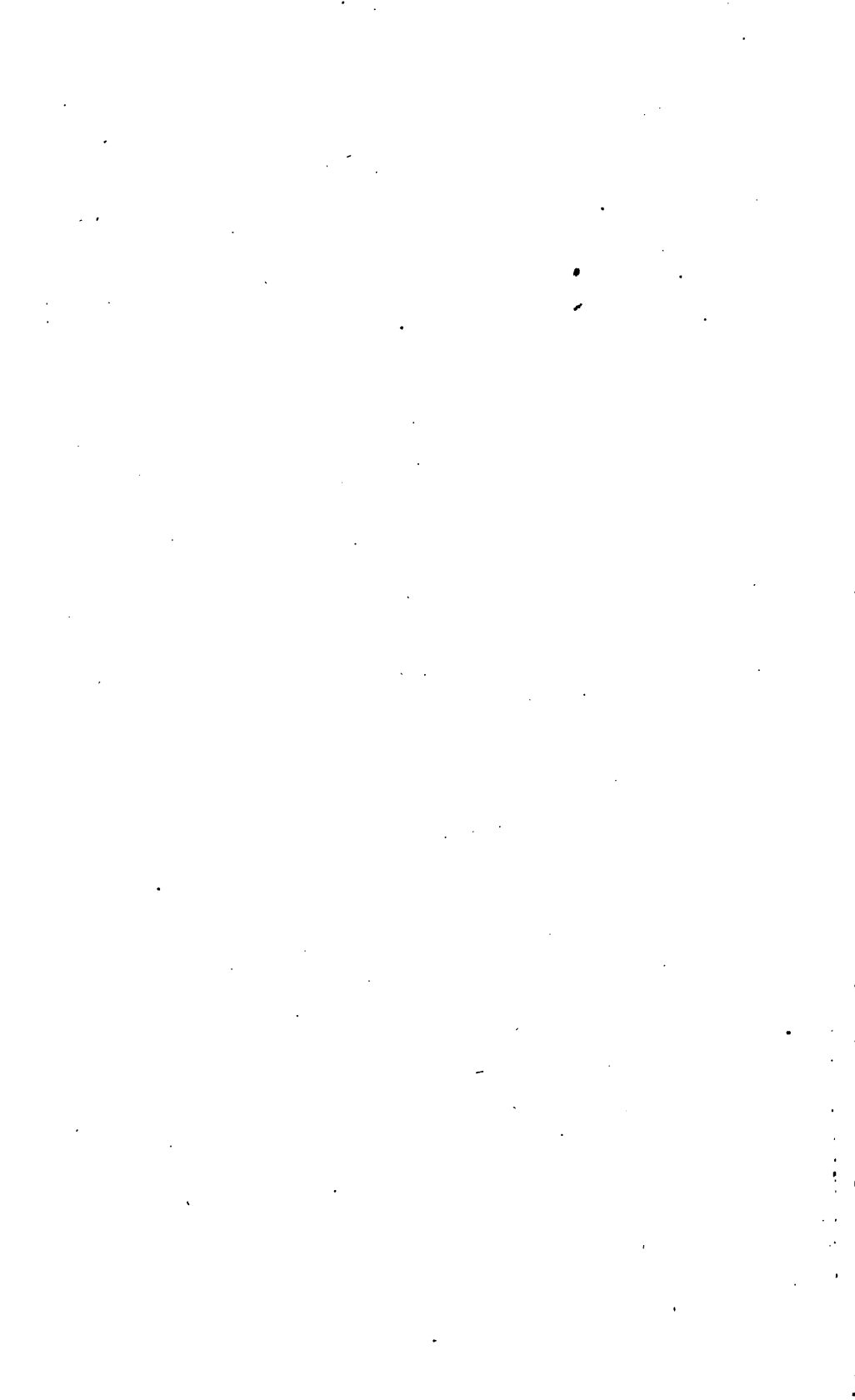


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# MARY STUART,

A TRAGEDY,

FROM THE GERMAN OF SCHILLER,

A NEW TRANSLATION;

ALSO

THE PLAIN OF DURA,

FROM THE

THIRD CHAP. OF DANIEL.

---

LONDON:

LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND

LONGMAN;

AND JOHN STANFIELD, WAKEFIELD.

1833.



**WAKEFIELD:**  
**PRINTED BY JOHN STANFIELD.**

## PREFACE.

*My translation of the entire play of Schiller's Maria Stuart, undertaken for amusement, had been completed before I saw that by the Rev. H. Salvin, published, it appears, in 1824. I afterwards met with M. Pierre Lebrun's French version, with a Preface, in which he seems to doubt whether he had retained too much or too little of Schiller's Tragedy. M. Lebrun's Drama appeared to me to possess no advantage, except its greater brevity; but, on the other hand, to have lost much by a different arrangement of the Scenes and Sentiments.*

*Warned by this experiment, and yet aware of the tedium arising from the too great prolixity of the original—too great a propensity to those “longeurs”*



*as the French call them, which the German Authors so often indulge in,—it struck me that an Improvement might be best effected by compression, or the omission of those repetitions and redundancies, which, whilst they add nothing to the general interest, militate so much against the commendation of Horace.*

*“Semper ad eventum festinat.”*

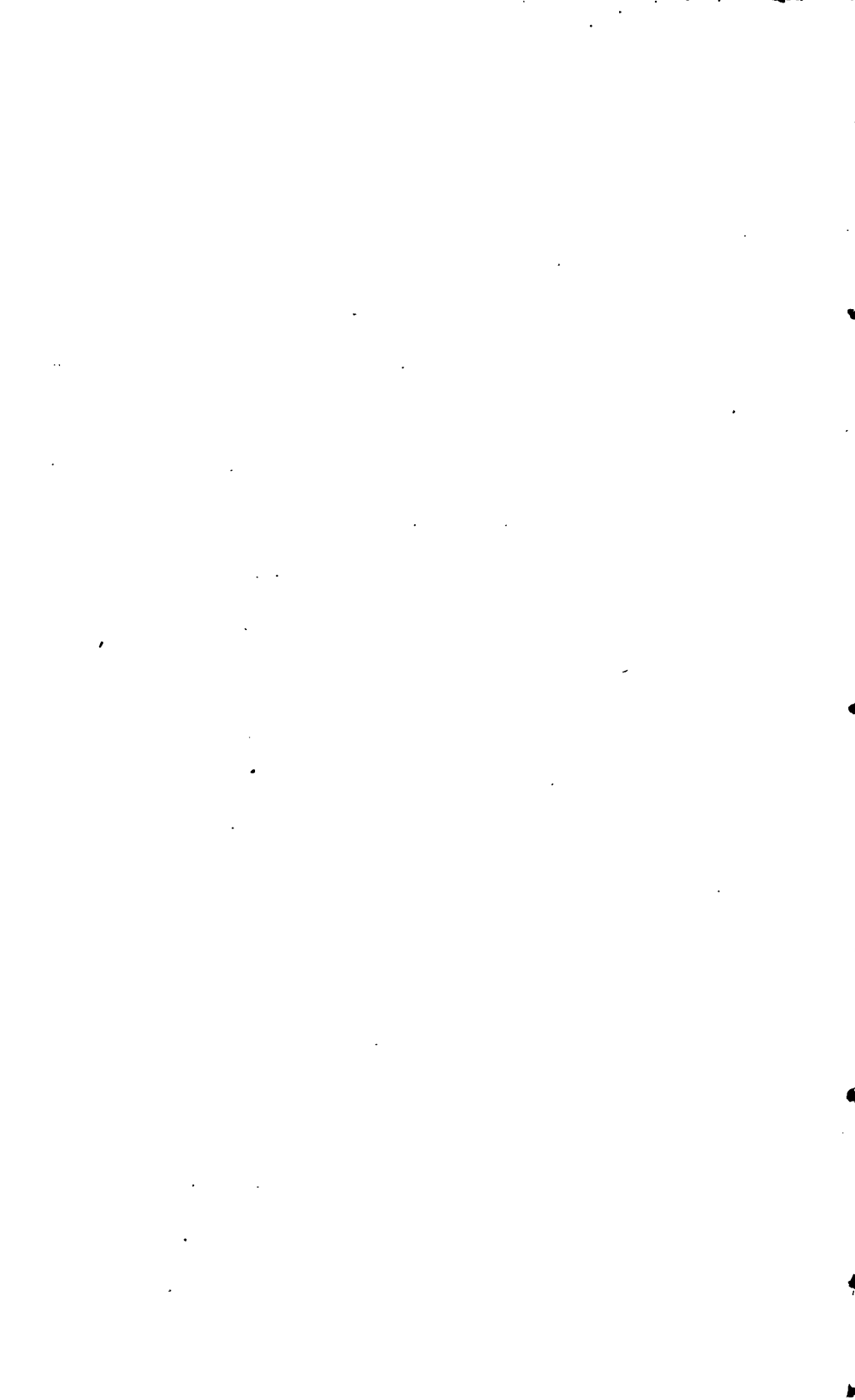
*And I accordingly determined upon that plan of curtailment.*

*As the omissions I have alluded to will be pointed out, as they occur, in short notes, I will only here premise that I have altogether suppressed the scene between Elizabeth and Mortimer, in which the Queen of England proposes to him (openly as to purpose, though somewhat covertly in words) to take off Mary by poison, it would seem. This appeared too atrocious and improbable, considering Mortimer had been totally unknown to her a short time previously; nor does it in any wise assist the plot. I have retained,*

*it is true, Burleigh's hint to Paulet to the same effect, but the Lord Treasurer is solely influenced by motives of State and solicitude for Elizabeth's safety, which sentiments Paulet fully participates in.*

*In all other particulars (except the omissions noticed) I have adhered faithfully to the original, even retaining the rhymes where they are introduced, and the lyrical measure at the commencement of the Third Act. To the general reader, I am induced to believe this more compact form of Schiller's Maria Stuart will not be unacceptable; and the Student of German Literature may, perhaps, find an amusement in comparing the translation of Mr. Salvin and the one now offered. An identity of expression in each will naturally have occurred in some places, but I trust too rarely, and of too little importance to require much apology.*

**THE AUTHOR.**



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ELIZABETH, QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

MARY STUART, QUEEN OF SCOTLAND—*A Prisoner  
in England.*

ROBERT DUDLEY, EARL OF LEICESTER.

GEORGE TALBOT, EARL OF SHREWSBURY.

WM. CECIL, BARON BURLEIGH—*High Treasurer.*  
EARL OF KENT.

WILLIAM DAVISON, *Secretary of State.*

SIR AMYAS PAULET—*Mary's Keeper, or Gaoler.*

MORTIMER, *his Nephew.*

COUNT AUBESPINE, *French Ambassador.*

COUNT BELLIÈVRE, *Envoy Extraordinary of France.*

O'KELLY, *Mortimer's Friend.*

DRURY, *Paulet's Servant.*

MELVIL, *Mary's Major Duomo, or Steward.*

HANNAH KENNEDY, *her Nurse.*

MARGARET CURLE, *her Waiting Woman.*

SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY.

OFFICER OF THE BODY GUARD.

FRENCH AND ENGLISH GENTLEMEN.

GUARDS.

SERVANTS OF THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

MALE AND FEMALE SERVANTS OF THE QUEEN OF  
SCOTLAND.

PAGE.



# MARY STUART:

A TRAGEDY.

## ACT I.

SCENE I. A CHAMBER IN FOTHERINGAY CASTLE.

HANNAH KENNEDY (*the nurse of Mary*), is discovered in vehement dispute with PAULET, who is about to break open the wardrobe, (*or secretaire*), DRURY, his assistant, has a wrench in his hand.

KENNEDY.

What do you here—what new temerity?  
Back from this Wardrobe!

PAULET.

Jewels! whence came they?  
Thrown from some upper chamber of the house—  
They might have brib'd the gard'ner to betrayal.  
Curs'd cunning of the sex! spite of my cares,  
My eager watchings, and my lynx eyed search,  
Still these mysterious treasures find an ingress!  
Where these were laid, there may be more conceal'd.

KENNEDY.

Desist, audacious—they're my Lady's secrets.

PAULET.

Just what I look'd for.

KENNEDY.

Mere unmeaning scrawls,

The exercises of an idle pen,

To while away the prison's tedious hours.

PAULET.

In idleness are evil thoughts most busy.

KENNEDY.

These writings are in French.

PAULET.

So much the worse,

It is the language of our foes.

KENNEDY.

Rough drafts

Are these of letters to the Queen of England.

PAULET.

Them I'll deliver—but, see here what glitters,

A regal frontlet, set with precious stones,

And interwoven with the 'Fleurs de Lis :—

Seize on it, Drury, lay it with the rest.

KENNEDY.

Oh shameless violence which we endure !

PAULET.

These in your custody are never harmless ;  
All turn to ready weapons in your hands.

KENNEDY.

Have pity, sir, and do not take away  
Our life's last ornament—Sometimes to look  
Upon her former grandeur glads our Queen ;  
But this remains of all that once was hers.

PAULET.

'Tis in safe hands, and scrupulously will,  
When future times permit it, be restor'd.

KENNEDY.

Who that beholds these cold and cheerless walls  
Would say here dwells a Queen ?—no canopy  
Of state that should her royal chair bedeck !—  
Must then her delicate and tender feet  
On the uncarpeted rough board be plac'd ?  
Vile pewter vessels on her table spread,  
Which e'en the simplest gentle might disdain !

PAULET.

At Stirling thus her royal spouse was serv'd,  
Whilst with her paramours she quaff'd from gold.

KENNEDY.

E'en the poor mirror's office here is wanting !



PAULET.

While she her image in the glass beheld  
There was no end to hopes, and enterprizes.

KENNEDY.

No books have we to entertain the mind !

PAULET.

The Bible's left you to improve the heart !

KENNEDY.

The lute amongst the rest is ta'en away !

PAULET.

Because her songs were rather too impassion'd !

KENNEDY.

Is this a lot for one so nobly born,  
Cradled and nurs'd in luxury and softness,  
And nurtur'd in the court o'the Medicis,  
Amidst unceasing pleasures and delights ?  
T'wd sure suffice to cut her off from power,  
And must these foolish trifles raise distrust ?  
Great loss of fortune elevates great minds,  
Which lesser evils less can tolerate.

PAULET.

You turn your hearts to vanities, the which  
Return to plague yourselves, and bring repentance ;  
Licentiousness of life will ever have  
Want and abasement for its recompense.

KENNEDY.

If aught of fault her tender youth committed,  
With God and her own heart should be the reck'ning :  
In England there can be no power to judge her.

PAULET.

Where she has sinn'd there should she suffer judgment.

KENNEDY.

No crime can she commit, so strait her chains !

PAULET.

Strait as they are, yet could she from these chains  
Stretch forth her hand to light the torch of war,  
And arm assassins 'gainst our gracious Queen,  
(Whom from such foul attempts may God preserve !)  
Whilst in these walls has she not conjur'd up  
Those base-born villains, Babington and Parry,  
To perpetrate accursed regicide ?  
Or have these bars forbidden, that the snare  
She spread, should catch the noble heart of Norfolk ?  
For her was sacrific'd the noblest head  
Of all this land, and fell beneath the axe,  
An awful warning ; yet, did this restrain  
The crowd of madmen, who with furious zeal  
Strove in her cause, as who should foremost perish ?  
The scaffold for her sake was gorg'd with blood,  
And still new victims suffer, nor will't end

The floor made hollow, and an entrance giv'n  
To plotting traitors, I asleep the while ?  
Accursed task that's fallen to my lot,  
To tend this reckless schemer ! From my eyes  
Sweet sleep is chas'd by still-recurring fears,  
Which make me walk, like a perturbed spirit,  
At midnight oft, to see if bolts are fast,  
And guards on duty—dreading each day's dawn,  
Lest fears should turn to facts—but courage ! still  
There's hope 'twill end soon. Better else it were  
To stand a sentinel at Hell's dread gate,  
And watch the damn'd souls that there inhabit ;  
Than this intriguing—cozening Queen.

KENNEDY.

She comes.

PAULET.

With outward signs of christian piety,  
Whilst worldliness and pride lurk underneath.

*Enter MARY with a Crucifix in her hand, KENNEDY  
hastens to meet her.*

KENNEDY.

My Queen, these people trample us to earth,  
Hardhearted tyranny now knows no bound ;  
Each coming day accumulates afflictions,  
And heaps fresh insults on thy sacred head.

MARY.

Compose yourself, and say what's now amiss.

KENNEDY.

See here your desk is forc'd—your papers, and  
Your only treasures, which with so much care  
We sav'd in France, of all your bridal jewels,  
Are in his hand. No longer have you any  
Royal appurtenance—all's snatch'd away.

MARY.

Hannah be calm, and do not think us regal  
Only when deck'd in such vain ornaments ;  
A low-born treatment doth not bring us low :  
England hath school'd me to no slight endurance,  
This too I can away with. Sir, you have  
Obtain'd with force what freely had been given.  
Amongst these papers you will find a scroll  
Destin'd to meet my royal sister's eye ;  
Give me your word of honor you will leave it  
Yourself in her own hands, and not false Burleigh's.

PAULET.

I'll meditate awhile ere I resolve.

MARY.

The letter hides no secret—I there ask  
The gracious favor of an interview.  
I never yet have seen her. I've been cited

T' appear before the judgment seat of men,  
Of those who never can be deemed my equals,  
And before whom my self-possession shrinks ;  
The Queen is of our house, our sex, our rank :—  
To her alone, a sister, and a sovereign,  
And above all, a woman—I can speak.

PAULET.

And yet to men—and men least worthy too—  
You oft your fortune, and your honour trusted.

MARY.

I also ask a second favor from her,  
The which humanity cannot deny ;  
The church's consolation and her rites,  
So long a prisoner have I ne'er enjoy'd ;  
And tho' from crown and liberty shut out,  
(My life too threatened) surely none will seek  
To close against my soul the gates of Heaven !

PAULET.

Prompt at your call the chaplain of this place—

MARY : (*Interrupting him hastily.*)

No chaplain will I—but desire a priest  
Of my own church—I likewise need a Clerk,  
Or Notary, who may pen my last commands.  
The prison's loansome languor spreads disease

In vital parts—my days, I fear, are numbered—  
I feel that I am hovering o'er the grave.

PAULET.

Why this is well—Reflections, such as these,  
Are most becoming.

MARY.

P'rhaps some speedier hand  
May cut short grief's too tardy operation.  
I'll disposition make of what is mine.

PAULET.

This is permitted, for our England's Queen  
Will not enrich herself by plundering you.

MARY.

My female servants have been parted from me,  
Likewise my male attendants—Where are they,  
What fortune waits them? I can endure their loss  
Were I but tranquilliz'd in this, that want  
Pinches them not.

PAULET.            (*Paulet is going.*)

They are well provided.

MARY.

You're going Sir, and still again you leave me,  
Nor deign you to relieve my heavy heart,  
From its tormenting doubts :—Your vigilant watch  
Hath barr'd me all communion with the world :

My fortune now rests with mine enemies ;  
A painfully long month hath just gone by,  
Since in this castle your commissioners  
Surpris'd me with their visit,—quickly form'd  
Their bar, before the which they hurried me  
Quite unprepared,—no counsel at my side,  
Arraign'd before a court, till then unknown,  
On charges fram'd with all the serpent's guile.  
Altho' bewildered and confounded quite,  
Their questions I was called upon to answer,  
While they, like spirits disappear'd and enter'd.  
From that day forth all's ignorance unto me,  
I seek in vain to read your countenance,  
To learn if innocence, and friendly zeal,  
Or my foes rancorous counsel hath prevail'd.  
Be silent then no longer, but declare  
If hopes, or fears are weightier in the scale.

PAULET.

Make up your reck'ning with the powers above !

MARY.

I hope their mercy, and I likewise hope  
A righteous sentence from my earthly judges.

PAULET.

You will have justice, that you may depend on.

MARY.

Is then my doom decreed ?

PAULET.

I know not, Lady.

MARY.

Am I condemn'd ?

PAULET.

Nothing has been told me.

MARY.

They'll make it speedy work where they begin :

Will death come unexpected like the trial ?

PAULET.

Think 'tis so order'd—then, if thus it be,

'Twill find you more prepar'd to meet your fate.

MARY.

Naught will surprize me, much a court will dare,

Where Burleigh and where Hatton are supreme.

*Enter—*MORTIMER.

MORTIMER to PAULET.

You're ask'd for Sir.

*(Retires.)*

MARY.

I've still another boon ;

When ought is to be said—(from you I can

Bear many things—your age I reverence)

This young man's insolence I cannot bear ;

Spare me the sight of his uncouth demeanour.



PAULET.

What seems to you a fault, 's to me a virtue ;  
He is not one of those soft fools, who weep  
At woman's false, and ever ready tears.  
A traveller, returned from Rheims and Paris  
With his old English heart unchang'd, my Lady.  
Your flattering arts will not take hold on him.

*(Exit.)*MARY and KENNEDY—*(manent.)*

KENNEDY.

And this the Rudesby utters to your face !  
This, this is hard indeed !

MARY—*(seems sunk in thought.)*

Too true alas !

In the bright days of our prosperity  
To flattery too oft we lent an ear,  
But now, good Kennedy, we meet reproofs,  
A retribution it is meet we bear.

KENNEDY.

How, dearest Lady, downcast, and dismay'd !  
You who was wont to be so blythe, that you  
Rather imparted comfort, than received it ;  
Whilst I your lightness censur'd, not your grief.

MARY.

Alas ! my Hannah, hast thou then forgotten

(My boding memory retains it well)  
Time in his revolution hath brought back  
The fatal day that Darnley met his death ? \*

KENNEDY.

'Twas not your deed—let those that did it answer.

MARY.

But not unconscious I, that in the snare  
That he was lur'd to, he might leave his life.

KENNEDY.

If you were conscious of the deed, you were not  
Then conscious of yourself—delirium  
Had seized upon you. Love in all his rage  
Made you the slave of your seducer, Bothwell :  
This reckless, and this ruthless, dreadful man  
Had gain'd an insolent mastery over you,  
Confounded and amaz'd you with enchantments,  
Calling th' infernal spirits to his aid !

MARY.

Alas ! the mighty magic that was us'd

\* There appears no good historical authority to enable any one to say positively how far Mary was implicated in the tragical death of Darnley, I have therefore softened the confession which Schiller has put into her mouth. Hannah Kennedy's excuse, likewise, required some alteration and curtailment.

Was his strong suit—and my too weak resistance,  
But who comes here ?

*(Mortimer shows himself at the door.)*

KENNEDY.

'Tis Mortimer, retire.

*(Mortimer enters cautiously.)*

MORTIMER to KENNEDY.

Leave us, and keep watch for us at the door.

MARY.

Hannah remain.

MORTIMER.

You need not fear me, Lady,  
This will report me right.

*(Giving a letter.)*

MARY.

Ah, what is this ?

MORTIMER.

Now go, Dame Kennedy, and keep the door,  
Lest that perchance my uncle should surprize us.

MARY.

Do as he tells you—go.

*(Exit Kennedy, seeming in much amazement.)*

This from my uncle,  
The Cardinal of Lorrain, and from France too !

(*Reads.*)

“Trust in brave Mortimer who brings you this,  
“No truer friend than him, have you in England.”

(*Looking at Mortimer with astonishment.*)

Is't possible---or is it an illusion?  
Have I, indeed, a friend so near, when I  
Appear'd forsaken of all worldly aid,  
In one, the very nephew of my gaoler,  
Whom I believ'd my bitterest enemy?

MORTIMER---(*throwing himself at Mary's feet.*)

Pardon O Queen this semblance by the which  
I have approach'd you. 'Tis a mask indeed  
That cost me much, but still I owe it more—  
It may procure deliverance, and safety.

MARY.

Rise, Sir, you have amaz'd me much—so quick  
I cannot from the depth of misery  
Ascend to hope—speak, Sir, explain these changes,  
That I may comprehend my happy fortune.

MORTIMER.

Time presses—soon my uncle will be here  
Accompanied by a hateful personage,  
But ere their direful message they unfold,  
Hear how the Heavenly Powers afford protection.

MARY.

I pray ye, Sir, proceed.

MORTIMER.

'Twere needless dwell

How my conversion to the Church of Rome\*

Was an effect of that persuasive mien,

And mind, which the accomplish'd Cardinal

Owens so peculiar : suffice to say

'Twas in my travels I found fellowship

Among your friends—there saw a portraiture,

Albeit imperfect, of your lovely self ;

Heard all your sorrows, all your sufferings ;

How nobly born, yet vilely held in bondage,

Pent up in prison, wrongfully condemn'd—

That rightfully could claim our England's crown.

MARY.

Ah ! this unhappy right ! 'tis thence that springs

The overflowing fountain of my ruin.

MORTIMER.

About this time I learnt from Talbot's castle

You were remov'd, and as my uncle's pris'ner

\* I have here abridged Mortimer's account of his travels and conversion, both by reason of its incongruous mixture of sacred and profane, and the inconsistency of being pressed for time, and yet prosing to a considerable extent.

Brought hither, and methought the hand of Heav'n  
Shew'd in this circumstance stretch'd out to save :  
The plot was quickly form'd, and straight I came  
Back to my native land—you know the rest.  
Saw I not then your beauteous self, O Queen,  
The breathing substance, and no more the shadow !  
Ah ! what a treasure doth this castle hold !  
No prison this, it is a paradise ;  
No compeer hath it in the English court !

*(Passionately.)*

Surely the man is Heav'n's peculiar care  
Who views your face and breathes the self same air.  
—But still my heart is fill'd with bitter anguish,  
Whene'er I set my foot within this threshold,  
'Stead of the joy which else your view had caus'd :  
The dread catastrophe is drawing nigh,  
Danger approaches with each hour, nor dare  
I longer wait, nor yet conceal from you  
The worst.

MARY.

My sentence, is it then determined ?  
Fear not to tell me, I can bear to hear it.

MORTIMER.

It is determined—your forty judges  
Have given their verdict—guilty—Lords and Com-  
mons,

And London's idle, headstrong citizens,  
All urge the judgments' execution—but  
The Queen still hesitates—not that she would save  
But seem compell'd—thus cunning 'tis, not pity.

MARY.

For such intelligence I am prepar'd—  
It frights me not—too well I know my judges.  
After the cruel treatment I have suffer'd,  
I readily can understand my freedom  
Is a lost hope, and so too my revenge ;  
My hopes, my vengeance, and my just pretensions  
Must vanish in the dungeon's endless gloom.

MORTIMER.

No, Queen, oh ! no, no, there they will not stop,  
The work of tyranny were half complete.  
So long as you exist, exist the fears  
Of England's Queen. No prison's deep enough ;  
They can be buried only in your grave.

MARY.

Will she then dare to stoop a crowned head—  
With ignominy place it on the block ?

MORTIMER.

This she will dare, oh ! longer doubt it not.

MARY.

No, Mortimer, your zealous fears deceive you,

They are the phantoms of your boding heart :  
It is not, Sir, the scaffold that I dread,  
Far stiller means hath England's Sovereign  
To quiet her own fears, and quench my hopes.  
Not whilst to private murder she can flee,  
Need she employ the executioner.  
'Tis this I tremble at, nor can I raise  
The goblet to my lips without a shudder,  
Lest I may find therein my sister's pledge.

MORTIMER.

Neither by open murder shall you fall,  
Nor secret practice—then dismiss all fear.  
Twelve English youths, as noble as they're brave,  
Have joined with me this morning in a league  
With powerful arms to ope this Castle's gates,  
And bear you hence. The French Ambassador,  
Count Aubespine, knows of our enterprize,  
And in his palace is our rendezvous.

MARY.

You make me tremble, Sir, but not with joy.  
A sad foreboding overcasts my heart.  
Have you consider'd well this enterprize ?  
The bloody heads of Babington and Tichborne,  
On London's bridge, a hideous spectacle,  
Do they not fright you—and the countless others



Who've found perdition in the self same toils,  
And but procur'd me a more galling chain?  
Fly hapless Youth, ere yet the watchful Burleigh  
Scent your design, and mingle in your plot :  
Haste from this country—all are whelm'd in ruin  
Who lend their friendly aid to Mary Stuart !

MORTIMER.

The bloody heads of Babington and Tichborne,  
On London's bridge, a hideous spectacle,  
Affright me not, nor yet the countless others—  
If they found death, they found a deathless name ;  
And, sure, 'tis bliss enough to die for thee !

MARY.

You strive in vain, nor force nor cunning helps me ;  
The foe is vigilant, and the chance is his.  
Not Paulet only and his host of guards—  
All England has its eyes upon my prison :  
Elizabeth alone can set me free.

MORTIMER.

Oh ! hope not that.

MARY.

One man there is alive—  
One only man there is, that can befriend me.

MORTIMER.

O name him to me.

MARY.

'Tis —— the Earl of Leicester.

MORTIMER.

What! Leicester! he, your bitterest enemy?  
The cherish'd favourite of Elizabeth?

MARY.

To him alone do I for safety look—  
Go to him, and with frankness own yourself,  
And for a document take him this paper—  
(*Drawing out a paper from her bosom.*)  
Therein he'll find my picture—take it to him,  
Long have I borne it here about my person,  
Since your keen uncle's watchfulness has barr'd  
All access to him—now my better angel  
Sends you to me.

MORTIMER.

Queen, what enigma's this?  
Resolve it to me.

MARY.

Leicester will resolve it,  
Trust him, and he'll confide in you. Who comes?  
(*Kennedy enters hastily.*)

KENNEDY.

Sir Amyas 'tis with some one from the Court.

MORTIMER.

'Tis my Lord Burleigh, summon resolution  
And hear with steadfastness whate'er he brings.

*(Exit through a side door followed by Kennedy.)*

MARY, BURLEIGH, and PAULET.

PAULET.

You lately sought a knowledge of your fate !  
This my Lord Burleigh's present here to tell.  
With resignation hear your doom.

MARY.

I hope

To hear it with the calm of innocence.

BURLEIGH.

I come to tell the sentence of the Court.

MARY.

'Tis just Lord Burleigh should become the mouth-  
piece,

When all the stops were govern'd by his finger.

BURLEIGH.

You speak as if the sentence were not new ?

MARY.

'Tis guess'd already by the messenger.

BURLEIGH.

You heard the accusation, and submitted  
T'appear before the Court.

MARY.

To this, indeed,

I was by Chatham's guileful cunning led ;  
I did it too in honor of the Peers ;  
But as for their commission I reject it.

BURLEIGH.

Whether, my Lady, you acknowledge or  
Disclaim this Court is but an empty form,  
Which in no wise impedes its jurisdiction.  
You breathe our England's air, enjoy protection,  
The advantage of our Laws, and therefore are you  
A subject of its Ruler.

MARY.

England's air

I breathe pent up in pris'n—is this t'enjoy,  
This the protection of the laws, which I  
Scarce know, or ere consented to observe ?  
No citizen am I of this your State,  
But the free Sov'reign of another land.

BURLEIGH.

I came not here to bandy arguments,  
The subject is no longer in debate ;  
'Tis found by forty voices, against two,  
That you the Act, which passed in the last Session,  
Have violated—and are guilty prov'd.

This Act ordains : „ When any tumults rise  
Within this realm on any one's behalf,  
Involving in them claims unto the throne,  
The offence is capital against the guilty.”  
Now it is prov'd that you—

MARY.

My Lord of Burleigh,  
I did not doubt a law expressly made,  
An Act of Parliament for my undoing,  
Would be enforc'd against me. Woe is me!  
Poor hapless victim, since the self same voice  
Proclaims the sentence that decreed the law!  
Can you deny it, Lord, that this same Act,  
Was purposely contriv'd for my destruction?

BURLEIGH.

It might have rather serv'd you as a warning;  
You have yourself transform'd it to a snare.  
You saw th' abyss that yawn'd beneath your feet,  
And yet forewarn'd you cast yourself therein:  
You join'd in Babington's conspiracy,  
Encourag'd his base murderous followers;  
You had the secret clue of all they purpos'd,  
And from your prison pointed the attack.

MARY.

When did I this? shew me your documents  
To prove these facts.

BURLEIGH.

You have already seen them;  
They were produc'd before you at the trial.

MARY.

Copies,—and written by a stranger's hand,  
Were there produc'd, read, as if dictated  
By me, and sworn to be my very words.

BURLEIGH.

Before his death did Babington declare  
They were the very letters he receiv'd.

MARY.

Why was he not then plac'd before mine eyes  
When living, why such haste to send him hence  
Into another world, ere you could bring  
Him front to front with me, an honest witness?

BURLEIGH.

Likewise your secretaries, Curle and Nau,  
Have sworn the same, that these are the commands  
Which they had written after your dictation.

MARY.

And on the evidence of my domestics  
Am I condemn'd? Upon their faith and truth,

Who 'gainst all faith and truth, betray their Queen,  
And break their trust, e'en by their testimony !

BURLEIGH.

You did acknowledge once that the Scot, Curle,  
Was conscientious, and a worthy man.

MARY.

I know him such, but in the hour of danger  
Is virtue's trial. 'Mid the torture's pangs  
Men say, or unsay ought—they know not what :—  
By swearing false he thought, perhaps, to save  
Himself, and yet not injure much his Queen.

BURLEIGH.

He freely took the oath to which he swore !

MARY.

And in my presence ?—no—Why, how is this ?  
Here are two witnesses both living, Sir,  
Let them confront me—let them now repeat  
Here in my presence what they know of me.  
And why refuse (be it a right or favour)  
What never is deny'd a murderer ?  
Talbot, my former keeper, has inform'd me  
That in this very reign an Act was pass'd  
Ordaining, that the accuser and accus'd  
Shall be brought face to face. Is't so, or have  
I been impos'd on ? I ask you, Sir Amyas,

Whom I have ever found a gentleman,  
Now tell me truly, tell me on your honor,  
Whether, or not, so stands the law in England ?

PAULET.

'Tis so, my Lady, this is England's law :—  
I must confess the truth.

MARY.

And now, my Lord,  
Since you so rigorously enforce your laws  
Where by their weight they crush me,—how comes it  
Where I might draw advantage, 'tis deny'd me ?  
Now answer me. Why was not Babington,  
Why not my secretaries, both now living,  
Produc'd, as law ordains, before my face ?

BURLEIGH.

Be calm, my Lady, it is not alone  
Your plot with Babington—

MARY.

'Tis that alone,  
Which puts me in the peril of the law.  
Hold to the question—do not start aside.

BURLEIGH.

'Twas likewise prov'd you had had with Mendoza,  
The Ambassador of Spain, some private dealing.





MARY.

Keep to the question, Lord.

BURLEIGH.

That your intrigue  
Purpos'd to overthrow the State's religion,  
And light up war with all the Kings of Europe.

MARY.

And when were all these plots conceiv'd—oh never ?  
—But say it were so. Here am I, my Lord,  
A pris'ner 'gainst all rights of nations—not  
In arms came I into this land—I came  
A suppliant for hospitality—  
In amity t'embrace a kinswoman,  
And where I hop'd protection, found alas !  
Ready prepar'd the durance of a prison.  
Say how allegiance, then, is due from me,  
Or what owe I to England ? I but use  
That right of force to free me from my chains  
Which duty hallows, and try might 'gainst might.  
I crav'd assistance from the Pow'rs of Europe ;  
And wheresoever war's legitimate  
Legal and loyal is the power we use.  
Assassination is a bloody deed—  
My conscience and my pride alike forbid.  
Murder would stain me—'tw'd dishonour me—

I say dishonour, not expose me to  
The condemnation, which the laws award,  
Since not for right, but which shall prove the stronger  
Is the sole question betwixt me and England.\*

BURLEIGH.

Appeal not to the fearful proof of might,  
For such will ne'er bestead the prisoner.

MARY.

I am the weaker—she the stronger—well  
She uses power, and brings me to my death,  
A sacrifice to her security.  
Let her acknowledge, then, that power alone,  
And not that justice terminates the strife :  
Not that the sword is us'd t'avenge the law,  
But to exterminate a hated rival :  
And let her not assume a holy veil  
To mask her violence and bloody deed.  
Such flimsy pretexts will not fool the world—  
She hath the murderer's power to dig my grave,  
But not to judge me. Let her, then, be brave

\* I have omitted the parts of the dialogue of Mary and Burleigh, which allude to the ancient enmity betwixt the English and Scotch, as making the scene too diffuse for the occasion. And for the same reason the character of the Queen and Burleigh's own.

And own her daring—vainly would she win  
The fame of virtue, and the fruits of sin.

*(Exit Mary.)*

*(Manent)*—BURLEIGH and PAULET.

BURLEIGH.

She braves us—and will brave us to the last,  
'E'en to the scaffold's foot. Her haughty spirit  
Will not be broken. Did the sentence move her ?  
Saw ye one tear steal from her eye—her cheek  
Lose ought of colour ? Did she ask our pity ?  
Well, knows she how our Queen can vacillate,  
And these our fears but animate her courage.

PAULET.

My Lord High Treasurer, this empty pride  
Will quick forsake her when its source is gone.  
If I might be so bold—in this affair  
Much that's irregular hath taken place :  
Both Babington and Tichborne should have been  
Confronted with her. Her accusing servants  
Should have been brought, and plac'd before her face.

BURLEIGH.

No, no, Sir Amyas ! These were risks too great ;  
Too great her influence is upon their minds ;  
Too potent is the spell of woman's tears.  
Her secretary, Curle, would in her presence—

When he should say what might affect her life,  
Trembling hang back, and unsay what he'd utter'd.

PAULET.

Thus will our enemies throughout the world  
Spread evil rumours of unjust proceedings :  
And all the ceremonial of the trial  
An idle farce be insolently call'd.

BURLEIGH.

This is the fear that troubles so our Queen.  
Would that the authoress of our ills had been  
Laid in her tomb, ere she had set her foot  
On English ground!

PAULET.

To this I say, Amen !

BURLEIGH.

Or that of some disease she'd dy'd in prison.

PAULET.

This land had then, escap'd much misery.

BURLEIGH.

Yet, had some visitation from above  
Cut short her days, we had been deem'd assassins.

PAULET.

Most true ! We cannot hinder men from thinking  
E'en what they list.

BURLEIGH.

Yet it had wanted proof,  
And caus'd incomparably less commotion.

PAULET.

Let it cause murmuring—'tis not when it's loud,  
But when it's just, that censure can molest us.

BURLEIGH.

Justice herself, however pure and holy,  
'Scapes not the breath of slander. The mob's voice  
Sides with the weaker, and with envious malice  
Pursues the happier conqueror's career.  
The sword of justice, which becomes man's hand,  
Shews hateful in a woman's; for the world  
Thinks not a woman can impartial be  
Toward Rivals of her sex. It is in vain  
Judges are scrupulous to uphold the laws,  
'Tis Majesty's prerogative to pardon,  
And soften what in law is most severe.

PAULET.

Then she—

BURLEIGH.

What then, should she be spar'd? No, no,  
She must not live—impossible! 'tis this,  
This very thing that thus disturbs the Queen,  
And from her wearied eyelids chases sleep.

I read her inmost struggles in her looks,  
Nor dares her mouth give utterance to her wishes :  
Yet they are clearly spoken by her eye,  
Which says will none of all my num'rous servants  
Spare me this horrid choice, to tremble hourly  
Upon my throne, or cruelly to send  
A Queen, and near relation to the block.

PAULET.

'Tis a dilemma unavoidable !

BURLEIGH.

It might be otherwise, as thinks the Queen,  
Had she but servants ready at her beck ?

PAULET.

Ready !

BURLEIGH.

Yes willing to interpret her.

PAULET.

How ! Willing to interpret ?

BURLEIGH.

Yes, such as

When they've in charge a poisonous serpent, do not  
Cherish the reptile like a costly jewel.

PAULET.

A costly jewel is a spotless name !  
The unsmirch'd reputation of the Queen  
We cannot guard with too much circumspection !

BURLEIGH.

When from the Earl of Shrewsbury was ta'en  
The Lady Mary, and to Paulet's care  
Intrusted, 'twas with this intent.

PAULET.

I hope

The meaning of the transfer was t'intrust  
The weightiest business to the worthiest hands.  
By Heav'n ! I ne'er had ta'en the odious office  
Of Gaoler, had I not believ'd that it  
Requir'd a man of strict integrity.  
Let me not be admonish'd that I owe it  
To ought but my unsullied reputation.

BURLEIGH.

'Twill be giv'n out she sinks apace, grows still  
Weaker, and weaker, and at length expires.  
So 'twill be thought that nature did the office,  
And your good name not suffer—

PAULET.

Conscience will !

BURLEIGH.

If you refuse to do the deed yourself,  
You will not shut the door against another ?

PAULET.

No murderer shall approach this threshold, whilst

My household Gods are guardians of my roof.

Her life is sacred to me—not more sacred

Is the revered head of England's Queen.

You are her judges—have pronounc'd her sentence,

And when the time comes, send your artisans

To dress her scaffold. Quick my gates shall open

T'admit the Sheriff and the Headsman—now

She is intrusted to my custody;

And be assur'd, while thus she is, so long

There is no power to do, nor suffer wrong.

*(Exeunt Burleigh and Paulet.)*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.



## ACT II.

SCENE—PALACE AT WESTMINSTER.

*A tournament and other sports are performed before Queen Elizabeth, Lords Shrewsbury, Leicester, Kent, Burleigh, &c. and Count Aubespine, and Count Bellievre, and other French and English Gentlemen, &c.\**

ELIZABETH to AUBESPINE.

Count, I lament that these accomplish'd Knights  
Should by their gallant zeal have miss'd the splendour  
Of their own Court, to witness my poor sports.  
I cannot boast such pomps and pageantries

\* The second Act in Schiller opens with a conversation between the Earl of Kent and Secretary Davison. The former describes to the latter who had not been able to attend them on account of his avocations the sports which had just concluded. These sports consisted of a joust or tournament in which Beauty's fortress is invested by desire, who is driven off and forced to retreat, &c. In representation at least it would be better to bring this upon the stage and to get rid of so much of the dialogue.

As the Queen Mother, I can only shew  
A rude, and honest people greeting me  
With benedictions, when I stir abroad.  
This spectacle, which I to strangers give,  
Is my peculiar pride. The brilliancies,  
The dazzling beauties, which display their hues  
In the parterre of Catherine's Paradise,  
Throw into shade the homeliness of ours.

AUBESPINE.

If in the Court of Westminster we find  
One only Fair, to fix our admiration ;  
Yet she's the object that unites all charms,  
Distributed elsewhere among the sex.

BELLIEVRE.

Exalted Queen, permit us now take leave,  
And glad our Royal Master with the news,  
So eagerly expected. So tumultuous  
His heart beats in his bosom, that from Paris  
He's gone to Amiens, sooner thus from Calais  
He will receive the tidings of his bliss.  
Your royal Yea shall sooth his rapt'rous ear,  
Delightful sound, borne on the winds' swift wing !

ELIZABETH.

Count Bellievre, I must still repeat  
'Tis not the time to press this matter further,

Nor this the hour to light the nuptial torch.  
The clouds of Heaven hang low'ring o'er the land ;  
And better would beseem the garb of sorrow,  
Than the gay pomp of bridal bravery.  
E'en now the bolt of Heav'n descends upon me,  
To spread dismay within my heart and house !

BELLIEVRE.

We ask but now your royal acquiescence  
To that which happier days may consummate.

ELIZABETH.

Kings are at best but slaves of their condition,  
Nor can they follow where their wishes lead !  
My wish has ever been to die unmarried,  
And my ambition, that my epitaph  
Should tell the world—here lies the maiden Queen :  
But this my subjects will not. They, forsooth,  
Anticipate the date of my demise :  
Our present happiness is not enough,  
I must propitiate their future bliss ;  
Offer for them my long priz'd, greatest good,  
And make my virgin liberty the victim.  
They think me but a woman, tho' my rule,  
Methinks, bespeaks the monarch, and the man.  
Yet well I know 'tis not the will of Heav'n  
That nature's ordinances should be slighted ;

And, my Progenitors have well deserv'd  
The world's applause, by freeing from their vows  
Those whom the Cloister had seduc'd to make them,  
And giving back to nature her own rights.  
And yet a Queen, who doth not spend her days  
In useless theories, and idle dreams ;  
But indefatigable bends her mind  
To the severer practise of her duty,  
Might be excepted from the general roll,  
Where half the human race must pay obedience  
E'en to the other !

AUBESPINE.

Queen, your throne's ennobled  
By every virtue—and it but remains  
To shine a pattern of those humbler duties,  
Which that sex boasts, whose greatest boast you are.  
Truly, the earth bears not alive the man  
Who might deserve you, or could claim such off'ring ;  
But yet, if birth, or worth, exalted rank,  
Or pers'nal comeliness in mortal man  
Could make him worthy of such honor.

ELIZABETH.

Doubtless,  
My Lord Ambassador, an alliance with  
A royal son of France must honor me ;

And I confess it freely—If't be so  
That nought can shield me from my peoples will,  
(And much I fear in this they'll prove the stronger)  
I know not that the world can boast a Prince,  
To whom with less reluctance I would yield,  
That highly valued pearl of price, my freedom.

BELLIEVRE.

It is our brightest hope ; but yet, it is  
Still but a hope—and the Prince wishes more.

ELIZABETH.

What wishes he ? Hath a Queen then nought  
*(She draws a ring from her finger and looks at it  
thoughtfully.)*

But what's in common with the humblest housewife ?  
Like tokens but remembrance us like duties  
And like submission—rings are us'd in marriage,  
And rings are likewise us'd to forge us chains.  
I pray you give this present to his Highness—  
It is not yet a chain, nor am I bound,  
But such it may become, and bind me to him.

BELLIEVRE.

*(Bowing his knee on receiving the ring.)*

I take the present in his Highness' name,  
And on your hand imprint the kiss of homage,  
Due to you gracious Queen, and now my Sov'reign.

ELIZABETH.

*(To Leicester, on whom she had fixed her eye during  
her last speech.)*

Permit, my Lord—

*(She takes from him the blue ribband, and puts it on  
Bellievre.)*

With these insignia,  
With which I now invest you, deck his Highness,  
Proclaiming him by this o'th Garters' Order.  
Henceforth may jealousies for ever cease,  
And one encircling bond of amity,  
For aye, unite the French and English crowns.

AUBESPINE.

Renowned Queen, this is a day of joy ;  
May it be such to all within this Isle ;  
May every tear be wip'd from every eye.  
All gracious beams your face, O let some ray  
From such benignity, descend upon  
The gloomy dwelling of an hapless Princess,  
Who stands so near in kin to both our Crowns.

ELIZABETH.

Here stop, my Lord.—Things incompatible  
Do not confound. If France with earnest faith  
Seeks our alliance, she must share our cares,  
And not extend her friendship to our foes.

AUBESPINE.

'Twd seem unworthy, even in your eyes,  
The widow of our Kings should we forsake,  
(In faith allied, altho' unfortunate,)  
In this our treaty. This our honor urges—  
This our humanity :

ELIZABETH.

In this particular,  
I know how intercession should be priz'd.  
France has perform'd the office of a friend,  
And I must do the duty of a Queen.  
(*She bows to the French Gentlemen, who respectfully  
retire.*)

*Manent*—ELIZABETH, SHREWSBURY, LEICESTER,  
and BURLEIGH. ELIZABETH *seats herself*.

BURLEIGH.

Illustrious Princess, you have crown'd to-day  
The heartfelt wishes of your faithful people :  
At length we can enjoy the halcyon days  
Which you have brought us ; now we need not dread  
The awful threat'ning of a stormy future.  
One only fear disquiets now the land ;  
The voice of all demands an immolation.  
This to succeeding times shall give assurance,  
And England's weal be bas'd eternally.

ELIZABETH.

Proceed, my Lord, what will my subjects more ?

BURLEIGH.

The head of Mary ! If you would assure  
The gift of freedom to your faithful people,  
She must be sped ; or, we must for your life  
Still live in fear. Let then the victim perish !  
A ruthless confraternity of bigots,  
Leagu'd with those Lorrain brothers, the dire foes,  
Fierce and implacable, of all your race,  
Have sworn a war wild, and exterminate.  
In Rheims, the seat of empire of this Bishop,  
Is the fam'd storehouse, where they forge their bolts ;  
There teach they regicide, and send from thence  
Their frequent votaries, fanatics resolv'd,  
Death dealing mummers, into Britain's Isle—  
Thence we're already three assassins : ceaseless  
From out this den is pour'd the hostile horde :  
The Atè of this still enduring havoc  
At Fotheringay sits, and guides the storm.  
No peace can ever be with her, and hers ;  
To strike the stroke is yours,—or to receive it :  
Her death's your life, or, if she lives, you die !

ELIZABETH.

My Lord, a grievous office you've ta'en on ye,



But the pure motive of your zeal I know ;  
Nor have I now to learn your wisdom's worth,  
But this your counsel, which advises death,  
My inmost soul abhors : pray you, suggest  
A milder judgment. Noble Shrewsbury,  
We ask your sentiments in this our strait.

SHREWSBURY.

You've giv'n the well-earn'd meed of praise to zeal  
Which animates the breast of Burleigh,—yet  
Though my tongue fail to match his in persuasion,  
My heart knows no superior in its truth.  
May the Queen's lengthen'd life prolong our joys,  
And peace still spread her blessings ! Never, sure,  
So brightly shone the sun upon our Isle,  
As since our native Princes hold the sway.  
Ne'er may we barter for a fancied good  
Our better fame ; at least, may Talbot's eyes  
Be clos'd in death ere such a fate befall !

ELIZABETH.

May God forefend, and keep our faith still spotless !

SHREWSBURY.

Well then, some other counsel must be sought  
To save the realm ; for Mary's execution  
Would violate all right. No subject she  
Of England's state, nor here can be a culprit.

ELIZABETH.

Thus, then, the Council, and the Parliament,  
And every Court of justice in the land  
Are in gross error, for with one consent  
They have pronounc'd for my prerogative.

SHREWSBURY.

Right sides not always with majorities ;  
England is not the world—your Parliament  
Is not the organ of the human race ;  
This land may not in future think, as now,  
No more than in time past,—for opinion  
Veers round the card : Affection ebbs and flows.  
Urge not the plea of importunity,  
By which your people would constrain your will :  
Whate'er your will, as quickly may you read  
In each one's countenance you are free to choose.  
Let it be known that bloodshed you abhor,  
That you but seek to save your sister's life ;  
Shew those who would advise a different course,  
That they indeed incur your royal anger,  
The dire necessity will quickly vanish,  
And that which e'rst was wrong, be deem'd most  
righteous.  
'Tis yours, and yours alone to judge. This need,

This flattering, broken reed, will not support you.  
Follow the dictates of your sex's softness.

ELIZABETH.

A zealous pleader is Earl Shrewsbury  
For mine, and this State's enemy ! O rather,  
Let me prefer the counsel that befriends me.

SHREWSBURY.

She hath no friendly advocate,—none dares  
To speak in her behalf ;—to stand the mark  
Of your displeasure :—Grant it to my age  
To be the friend of one bereft of all !  
Shall it be said that in your council chamber  
Passion, and self love had so loud a voice,  
And clamour'd meek tongu'd pity into silence ?  
On all sides, all conspires to work her ruin :  
Your eyes have never deigned to look upon her ;  
Strange to your country, stranger to your heart.  
I do not call her innocent,—'tis said,  
She caus'd the murder of the King, her husband ;  
'Tis sure, she married with the murderer !  
The times were troublous then ; she was begirt  
With rude, unmanner'd vassals—then the arms,  
That mightiest seem'd for aid, receiv'd her in them.  
Tender, untaught, she first took root in France,

The seat of levity, and idle joys :  
There, in the intoxicating round of mirth,  
Truth, with her warning voice, did never reach her ;  
But, dazzled with the meteor glare of vice,  
And borne along the current of destruction :  
She, peerlessly, outshone all other Dames ;  
Pre-eminent in beauty, as in birth.\*

ELIZABETH.

Compose yourself, my Lord of Shrewsbury ;  
Consider, that we here in council sit :  
Beyond all praise, indeed, must be those charms  
Which so inflame the frozen veins of age !  
What tongue tied, my Lord Leicester,—doth the  
cause  
That makes him eloquent, but make you mute ?

LEICESTER.

I'm dumb with wonder, Queen, your ears should  
harbour  
These idle tales, which cred'lous citizens  
Report from mouth to mouth, in London's streets,  
E'en till they mount the chamber of your council ;  
And busy with their buz the minds of statesmen !

\* There is some omission, for the sake of compression, in Shrewsbury's speech relating to Elizabeth's own education or nurturing, but no alteration in what is retained.

I'm free to own, it is most marvellous,  
That this expatriated Queen of Scotland,  
(A little realm, but yet beyond her rule :)  
Reft of her proper throne, her vassals scorn,  
The outcast of her land, a prisons' inmate,  
Should thus unnerve you with a sudden terror.  
Why, by the Omnipotent! shake you thus with dread?  
Is it because she claims your crown, because  
The house of Guise denies to you your title?  
Can these same Guises crumble into dust  
The rights, which you derive from birth, from Acts  
With which your Parliament confirms your right?  
Stands she not by the testament of Henry  
Cut off—in silence? and shall our country, which  
Shines out, illumin'd by the Reformation,  
Cast herself back into a Papist's arms;  
Quit you, our Royal Mistress, Queen ador'd,  
And side with Darnley's blood-stained murderess?  
What mean then the importunates who urge  
Your instant marriage, to exclude this heir?  
(Who they suppose will the survivor be)  
And save the Church, and State from such a danger!  
You flourish still in youth and loveliness;  
While she, each day, but seems the more to fade.  
By Heav'n! you will, I hope, continue long,

And tread upon her grave through many a year—  
No need then to precipitate.

BURLEIGH.

Not always

Hath the Lord Leicester giv'n such advice !

LEICESTER.

'Tis true, my voice and vote were at the trial,  
Given for her condemnation, but in council  
My speech is other. 'Tis not here the question  
Of what the law ordains, but what's expedient.  
Is this the time to dread a danger from her,  
When France, her nat'ral friend, forsakes her wholly ;  
When you prepare to give a son of France  
The blessing of your hand in wedlock—when  
The hopes of issue beam upon this land ?  
Why put her then to death ? she's dead already ;  
Contempt is true extinction ; but beware  
Commisseration call her not to life.  
Here is my counsel. That the sentence, which  
Declares her life is forfeit, should remain  
Still in full force :—Then let her live, but live  
Under the axe's edge, which, when an arm  
Is rear'd in her defence, falls down upon her !

ELIZABETH.

My Lords, I now have heard your various counsel,

And thank you for your zeal :—With God's assistance,  
The enlightener of Kings, I'll weigh your reasons,  
And make the choice where wisdom seems most ripe.

*Enter—PAULET.*

What is your errand, good Sir Amyas ?

PAULET.

Illustrious Princess, I have here a letter  
*(Presenting a paper.)*  
Of which the Lady Mary makes me bearer.

BURLEIGH.

Give me the letter. *(To Paulet)*

PAULET.

Pardon, my Lord Treasurer ;  
She charg'd me straitly to no other hands,  
But to the Queen's, I should deliver it :  
She said I was her enemy, I am so  
But of her crimes. What is compatible  
With my strict duty is at her command.

BURLEIGH.

What are the letter's contents ? Idle plaints,  
Which might be spar'd the Queen's too tender heart ?

PAULET.

What they contain has not been hid from me ;  
She asks the favor that an interview  
May be accorded her.

BURLEIGH.

Impossible !

SHREWSBURY.

And why not so—asks she then ought amiss ?

BURLEIGH.

A murderess who has thirsted for her blood  
Is self excluded from the Royal presence.  
He who is truly loyal to his Prince  
Can never give so trait'rous a counsel !

SHREWSBURY.

Will you, when pity moves our Sovereign's breast,  
Step in between, and strangle the emotion ?

BURLEIGH.

She is condemn'd :—Under the very axe  
Her head is laid : a head so doom'd to fall  
Is not a sight fitting for Royalty :  
The execution cannot then be done,  
If Majesty should once but deign approach her :  
The Royal presence is a gracious pardon.

ELIZABETH.

*(After having read the Letter and drying her eyes.)*

O ! what is man, and what the bliss of mortals !  
How fallen is this Queen, who once stood high  
On the proud pinnacle of hope and fortune !  
Once destin'd the possession of a throne



Most ancient of our days. In fancied glory  
She boasted of three crowns upon her brow !  
How chang'd her language now, from when she first  
Assum'd the ensign of our banner, and  
Was hail'd by courtly flatterers the Queen  
Of our two British Islands. Pardon, Lords,  
My heart is struck with keenest sense of woe ;  
And my soul sorrows in the contemplation,  
That fortune in her fearful, headlong flight,  
Almost o'erwhelming this our proper head,  
Should shew how frail a fabric is our state.

SHREWSBURY.

O Queen, 'tis Heaven-born pity melts your heart ;  
Cherish the soft emotion. Mary hath  
Most dreadfully aton'd her grievous crime :  
Stretch forth your hand, and raise her from the dust ;  
Illumine, like an angel, scattering light,  
The tomblike darkness of her prison house !

BURLEIGH.

Be firm, illustrious Princess. Let not pity,  
However praiseworthy, as human feeling,  
Draw you aside, subversive of the freedom  
To act the part necessity demands.  
You cannot pardon her—You cannot save.  
Do not give cause then to the odious censure,

That you survey'd, and triumph'd in the pain  
Of one whom though you saw—you sacrific'd.

LEICESTER.

Let us not overstep, my Lords, the bounds  
Our duties dictate. Since so full of wisdom  
Our Sovereign is, she needs not us to guide her.  
The course of justice is not then impeded—  
Though Princesses enjoy each others presence.  
'Tis England's law, and not the Sovereign's will  
That judges Mary. It is truly worthy  
Of the magnanimous Elizabeth  
To follow still the whisperings of her heart,  
Though the law's rigour slacken not its course.

ELIZABETH.

Retire, my Lords, we shall discover means  
To blend in just accordance what compassion  
Would ask of us, or justice may demand.\*

*(The Lords retire and the Scene closes.)*

\* The scene between Elizabeth and Mortimer, in which she gives him the covert commission of taking off Mary by poison (it is to be supposed) being omitted, it was necessary to introduce Mortimer to Leicester in some other way—but the translation resumes with "Do you merit trust?" and afterwards adheres strictly to the original.

## SCENE—A PART OF THE PALACE.

*Mortimer addresses Leicester, whom he had followed  
for an opportunity of speaking to him.*

MORTIMER.

My Lord, if leisure serve I crave to speak  
A word in private—I am Mortimer,  
Sir Amyas's nephew.

LEICESTER.

Do you merit trust ?

MORTIMER.

This is a question I would ask of you.

LEICESTER.

You something have t' impart to me in secret ?

MORTIMER.

First I must know if I can venture it !

LEICESTER.

And what is ~~my~~ security t'wards you ?  
Let my distrust of you be not displeasing !  
I see you wear a double mask among us ;  
One must be false—now which of them is true ?

MORTIMER.

The observation still fits you, my Lord !

LEICESTER.

Who shall begin to shew a confidence ?

MORTIMER.

He who has least to risk in the adventure !

LEICESTER.

This then is you.

MORTIMER.

No, 'tis yourself ; you can,  
A great and potent Lord, by your bare word,  
Crush me to earth, whilst I am powerless  
Against the rank, and favor you enjoy.

LEICESTER.

There you mistake, Sir :—In all else, indeed,  
I'm powerful here ; but in this tender point,  
(In which I now make trial of your truth,)  
I am the weakest of the Court beside ;  
And any witness, howe'er vile, o'erthrows me.

MORTIMER.

If the redoubted, mighty Earl of Leicester  
Thus lowers himself beneath me, by confessing  
To me so far, I'll rise in self esteem,  
And will afford a gen'rous example.

LEICESTER.

Lead on in confidence, and I will follow.

MORTIMER.

The Queen of Scotland sends this letter to you.

*(Drawing forth the letter.)*

LEICESTER.

Speak softly Sir. (*Alarmed and snatching the letter.*)

What do I see ! It is  
Her portrait. (*Kisses and looks at it with ecstasy.*)

MORTIMER.

Now you've won belief, my Lord !

LEICESTER.

(*Having hastily read the letter.*)

You've been inform'd, Sir, what this letter treat of ?

MORTIMER.

Nothing know I.

LEICESTER.

But she has, without doubt,  
Confided ?—

MORTIMER.

Nothing is confided to me :

You would, she said, explain the mystery.

'Tis an enigma, that the Earl of Leicester,

The fav'rite of Elizabeth, the foe

Declar'd of Mary, and what's more, her judge,

Should be the man from whom this very Queen

Expects deliverance from impending ruin.

Truly 'tis so, for your eyes bear me witness

Too plainly how your feelings yearn towards her !

LEICESTER.

But shew me first how 'tis that you yourself  
Take such an earnest interest in her fortune ;  
And what has rais'd her confidence in you.

MORTIMER.

A few words will suffice to tell my tale ;  
Having abjur'd my faith at Rome, and form'd  
Connexion with the Guises, the Archbishop  
Of Rheims gave me credentials to Queen Mary.

LEICESTER.

I know your recantation, that it was  
That gave a first impression of your truth.  
Give me your hand, Sir, and excuse my doubts :  
Since Walsingham and Burleigh hate me so  
I cannot well be cautious over much.  
I know they watch, and spread the toils for me ;  
And you might be their creature, and their tool  
To lure me to their snares.

MORTIMER.

In what small space  
Hath here so great a Lord his leave to walk !  
I pity you, my Lord.

LEICESTER.

Joyfully, I cast me  
On friendship's sympathizing bosom, where

My long restraints I may, at length, disburthen.  
You marvel, Sir, that I so soon have chang'd  
The sentiments I held against Queen Mary !  
In truth I never hated her ; the chance  
Of times and seasons made me her opponent.  
In former years, you know, that we were destin'd  
One for the other, ere she gave her hand  
To the Lord Darnley—When around her yet  
Shone the effulgence of exalted station,  
I coldly then spurn'd at my happiness.  
A prisoner now, nay more, about to perish,  
(Strange as it seem) I risk my life to gain her.

MORTIMER.

Such conduct is right noble !

LEICESTER.

Since then, much

Is chang'd, from what it was, in my ambition :  
I thought to gain the hand of England's Queen ;  
This 'twas, that shut my eyes to youth and beauty,  
And made me think the prize beneath my aim.

MORTIMER.

'Tis known, you stood, of all mankind, most high  
In the Queen's favour.

LEICESTER.

It seem'd so, indeed ;—

How now, then ? After love, ten years assum'd

And rage, as long repress'd,—yet vainly all;  
Oh ! Sir, my heart bursts out ;—my indignation,  
So long pent up, now forces out an utterance.  
Men thought me happy ; little did they know  
The bitter chains that drew down so much envy :  
For which, ten tedious years, I offer'd incense  
Before the idol of her vanity,  
And bow'd myself, with slavery's demeanour,  
To all the changes of her tyrant temper ;  
A toy, or priz'd capriciously, or slighted.  
One moment flatter'd by her tender soothing,  
The next by her fierce pride disdain'd, and spurn'd at ;  
Tortur'd, alike by favor or by frowns :  
A pris'ner, watched with Argus like suspicion,  
And like a stripling, school'd and catechiz'd !  
Oh ! language hath no term that may pourtray  
This Hell on Earth !

MORTIMER.

I feel for you, my Lord.

LEICESTER.

And cheated at the goal !—Another bears  
Away the prize of all my long dissemblings.  
My long acknowledg'd rights must disappear  
Before a blooming bridegroom's new-born claim :  
I must now take the rearward of the stage,



Where I have play'd so long the shining parts.

'Tis not her hand alone I must resign,

Her favor now this stranger will usurp.

He is accomplished, and she a woman !

MORTIMER.

Than Catherine's Court there is no better school

Where those, who list, may learn the flatterer's art !

LEICESTER.

So farewell, then my hopes. Now in this wreck

Of my success, I seek to seize a plank,

And turn my eye again to that bright spot

Of early expectation : Mary, pictur'd

In all the blaze of beauty, stands before me :

Her charms, her youth resume their wonted empire :

No longer cold ambition's in the scale,

And now I feel the treasure I have lost.

I see with terror to how great a depth

She is plung'd down, and through my guiltiness.

'Tis this that makes me keenly seek the means,

If any be, to save her, and possess her ;

And, through a trusty messenger, she knows

How my chang'd heart is wholly now her own.

This letter, which she sends to me through you,

Conveys me her forgiveness, and assures me,

Herself will be the prize of her deliverance.

MORTIMER.

But, still you take no steps to make her free,  
And suffer sentence to be pass'd upon her,  
Adding your proper suffrage to condemn her.  
Something miraculous must come to pass,  
I must embrace the Romish faith, and forms,  
And Heav'n ordain deliverance, not dream'd of,  
Else had she never found access to you.

LEICESTER.

On my side hath the torture not been less ;  
Just at that time she quitted Talbot's castle  
For Fotheringay, and your stern Uncle's wardship :  
Then was all access barr'd. I needs must follow  
As the world led, or lose all trace of her.  
But think not I had given her up to death :  
Oh no, my hope has been—my hopes are still,  
Still to procrastinate the last sad scene,  
Till some plot shall be ripe to set her free.

MORTIMER.

Behold it ripe—Leicester, your noble trust  
Deserveth reciprocity. 'Tis I,  
I, that will free her—therefore am I here.  
All is prepar'd ; we need but your support,  
And victory shall crown our enterprize.

LEICESTER.

What mean you, Sir! You fright me—what you would—

MORTIMER.

With force will I break through her prison's gates :  
My comrades are prepar'd, and all is ready.

LEICESTER.

Have you associates, and conspirators ?  
Alas, what perils you are drawing round me!  
And are they conscious of my privy ?

MORTIMER.

Fear not ; the scheme, without your aid, was plann'd ;  
Without your aid, it can be perfected :  
Should she persist not, that your arm must save her.

LEICESTER.

Can you assurance give me, doubly sure,  
That in this plot my name is not involv'd ?

MORTIMER.

Rely on it. How, my Lord, so thoughtful  
At an intelligence which brings you help ?  
You would the Stuart lib'rate, and possess,  
And all unlook'd for find the aid of friends :  
The shortest way seems furnish'd you by fortune,  
And yet you show embarrassment, not joy !

LEICESTER.

Force can do nothing, such an enterprize  
Too perilous were.

MORTIMER.

And so is the delay.

LEICESTER.

I say, Sir Knight, the risk should not be run.

MORTIMER.

*(Ironically.)*

No, not for you who would enjoy the prize !  
We only seek to save her, and are not  
So very cautious.

LEICESTER.

You're too rash, young man !  
In things so delicate and hazardous !

MORTIMER.

You're too deliberate and punctilious ?

LEICESTER.

I see the snares, that are spread all around.

MORTIMER.

I feel the courage to break through them all.

LEICESTER.

This courage is foolhardiness and madness.

MORTIMER.

This caution is not bravery at least.

LEICESTER.

You wish perhaps to end like Babington ?

MORTIMER.

Not you to emulate the noble Norfolk !

LEICESTER.

Norfolk ne'er brought his bride unto his home.

MORTIMER.

He shew'd, at least, that he was worthy of her.

LEICESTER.

If we are lost, our ruin pulls her down !

MORTIMER.

Sparing ourselves, we leave her still unsav'd.

LEICESTER.

You hear not, heed not ;—will, impetuous, all  
With blind, and hasty zeal o'erthrow, and mar,  
Which had commenc'd so evenly its course.

MORTIMER.

An even course forsooth, prepar'd by you ;  
How, if some secret villain had cut out,  
The nearest way, and drugg'd the bowl ? 'twas hinted  
Such practise would not be displeasing.

LEICESTER.

I,

Perhaps, with wiliness may win the Queen,  
To meet her rival in an interview ;

And, if she takes this step, she then must stop.  
Burleigh says well : for, if they see each other,  
The execution cannot then take place.  
I'll use all means to bring about my purpose.

MORTIMER.

And what gain you thereby—or what gains she ?  
Will not the future still be like the past ?  
She never will be free. The mildest lot,  
That she can draw, is evermore a dungeon—

*(Some one approaching is heard. Leicester inter-*  
*rupts him.)*

LEICESTER.

I hear a footstep, go—

MORTIMER.

But Mary hopes ;—  
And take I nought, but sorry solace back ?

LEICESTER.

Carry my vows of everlasting love.

MORTIMER.

Bring them yourself. Her's are my vows of service,  
But I am not the servant of your vows.

*(Exit Mortimer.)*

ELIZABETH *enters*—LEICESTER *seems thrown into disorder, but gradually recovers himself.*

ELIZABETH.

What causes the Lord Leicester  
Look so bewilder'd ?

LEICESTER.

*(Surveying her with feigned admiration.)*

'Tis thy heavenly aspect.

Oh ! never saw I thee so rich in charms,  
My wond'ring eyes are dazzled with thy beauty !

ELIZABETH.

Whence are those sighs ?

LEICESTER.

Have I not cause for woe,  
Who see you lovely thus, and thus must lose you ?

ELIZABETH.

What lose you then ?

LEICESTER.

Thy heart, thy precious self.  
Soon wilt thou find thy happiness complete,  
Encircled in a youthful bridegroom's arms,  
The sole and rightful Sov'reign of thine heart.  
He is of Kingly race ; such am not I,  
But as I am, I challenge all the world  
To shew me one, within the sphere of earth,

Who is my equal in my adoration.

The Duke of Anjou never did behold you,

And, therefore, can but love your fame and glory :

I love thyself. Wert thou a shepherdess,

The humblest of thy kind, and I a Prince,

The most exalted, I would bow me down,

And offer at thy feet my diadem.

ELIZABETH.

Give me your pity, Dudley, not your blame ;

I dare not ask my heart—the choice had then

Been other : 'Tis not mine to grace the man

I love, though dear to me above mankind,

With the bright jewel I am doom'd to wear.

While to the wanton Stuart it was granted,

To chuse her partner where her fancy prompted.

She knew no scruples, and with eager lips,

She quaff'd the cup of pleasure to the dregs.

LEICESTER.

And now she drains the bitter cup of woe.

ELIZABETH.

She set the judgment of the world at naught ;

Careless, and light she never took upon her

The yoke which I have borne—preferring still

My Kingly duties. Still she gain'd applause,

And lur'd around her jocund youth and age.



Thus 'tis with men : voluptuaries all !  
They join the train of levity and joy,  
Nor ought esteem that calls for reverence.  
E'en Talbot's frozen age grew young again,  
Soon as her charms became his fluent theme.

LEICESTER.

Excuse him, she was once his prisoner,  
And fool'd him with her winning flattery.

ELIZABETH.

And is she then so exquisitely fair ?  
So many and so various are the portraits,  
Which are reported, that I fain would know  
What is the true one. Painters play us false :  
Descriptions are deceitful—often lie :  
So to my sight alone I'll credence give.  
Why do you cast such eager looks upon me ?

LEICESTER.

Comparing in my mind's eye you and Mary :  
I'll not conceal the pleasure of the scene  
(Could we but plan it in all secrecy,)  
To view the Stuart, when oppos'd to you !  
Then might you boast a victory complete.  
Would she could have the humbling to behold  
How much your pers'nal gifts transcend her own !  
How greatly, e'en in Majesty of mien,

You rise above her—whilst in other virtues,  
That grace the sex, you leave her far behind.

ELIZABETH.

In age she is at least my junior!

LEICESTER.

She seems the contrary. Perhaps, her suff'rings  
May have produc'd a premature decay!  
Her chagrin too, at this new French alliance,  
For she did ever boast them firmest friends!

ELIZABETH.

I am solicited to see her! *(Negligently.)*

LEICESTER—*(With earnestness.)*

She

Asks for a favor, let it be a vengeance:  
You may, indeed, conduct her to the block;  
But this were less her terror, than to see  
Her boasted charms thrown into shade by yours.  
Methinks, your beauty could obtain no triumph  
Greater than now. When she beholds you lovely,  
With the attendant reverence you inspire,  
Ennobled by the splendour of the crown,  
Which she so light, and wanton cast away;  
And now with wedlock's sacred chain adorn'd,  
Her knell of dissolution then has toll'd.  
How, if this very instant you appear,

As you are now before her ? never can  
You find a happier moment—

ELIZABETH.

Now, no, no,

Not now, good Leicester : I must first reflect—  
Must first with Burleigh—

LEICESTER.

Burleigh—he has skill,

But only in state matters—there are points  
Of tenderness belonging but to women :—  
Nay, I might call it here state policy  
For you to see her. By this noble action  
You will insure the popular applause.  
Hereafter may you, as you think most fit,  
Or feel, most willing, treat your hated foe.

ELIZABETH.

It will not well beseem me to see thus  
A kinswoman in shame and poverty !  
'Tis said, she is not royally attended :  
To view these wants might seem reproachful to me !

LEICESTER.

Hear my advice :—Chance has provided means  
As we desire. To-day the hunt takes place—  
The road is close to Fotheringay Castle :  
There may the Stuart in the park appear,

And you too, without purpose, or design :  
And, if you feel not so dispos'd when there,  
Do not approach her.

ELIZABETH.

Be this conduct folly ;  
The folly is not mine but yours, Lord Leicester.  
To-day I will deny you no request,  
Since I have you, of all my folk beside,  
This day most grievously chagrin'd and pain'd.  
Were 't but your fancy—thus, you may perceive,  
How leans my inclination—sure 'tis love  
That says you yea, when reason can't approve.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

## ACT III.

### SCENE I.—A PARK.

*Thick trees and foliage in the foreground which opens to an extensive view in the distance. MARY comes forward with a bounding step. KENNEDY follows slowly.*

KENNEDY

You flit away, like to a bird on wing ;  
I cannot hold your pace, 'beseech you wait.

MARY.

Let us our new-gotten freedom employing,  
Wanton like children, disportive and gay,  
And keenly the sweet meadow's greensward enjoying,  
With wings to our feet, make lightsome the way.  
Have I the dungeon's dread barrier o'er bounded,  
Have I escap'd from the depth of the grave ?  
By Zephyrs so soft, and ethereal surrounded,  
With draughts so refreshing my lips will I lave.

KENNEDY.

My dearest Lady, 'tis but that your prison  
Is grown a little wider, than before ;  
You do not now behold the walls that bar us,  
For the deep foliage of the trees obscures them.

MARY.

Thanks to the friendly shady tree,  
That hides my hated prison's wall !  
Let me but dream that I am free ;  
Ah ! why remind me of my thrall ?  
Bounded by naught, but Heavenly blue,  
Free, and unfettered is my view,  
And ranging through immensity :—  
There, 'midst the misty mountain's brow,  
The frontiers of my realms begin ;  
And Gallia's distant oceans flow  
Where clouds are southward steering seen.  
Swift clouds, that navigate the air !  
Ye, that in those bright vessels fare !  
Oh ! greet the dear land of my youth :—  
Prisons and bonds forbid me fly,  
Ah ! no Ambassadors have I ;  
Aloft in air your course is free,  
There England hath no Monarchy !

KENNEDY.

My dearest Lady, you have lost your reason :  
This freedom long debarr'd you makes you giddy.

MARY.

Lo ! where a fisherman his bark doth moor,  
So mean an instrument might lend me aid :—  
If he would bear me to some friendly shore,  
With costly jewels should the freight be paid,  
And this one voyage exempt him from his trade.

KENNEDY.

Your hopes are vain ;—do you not see'ith distance  
Our guards are on the watch ? a stern command  
Plants a wide space betwixt the path allow'd us  
And ought of pity in a human shape !

MARY.

No, no, good Hannah, 'twas not all in vain  
My prison was unbarr'd ;—this lesser grace  
Is but an earnest of some greater joy.  
I do not now mistake, it is the hand  
Of one, who loves me, that I have to thank :  
Lord Leicester's powerful arm is manifest.  
My dungeon by degrees will ope itself,  
And I, from little, thus be train'd to more.  
Till I, at length, behold the face of him  
Who bursts my bonds asunder, and for ever.

KENNEDY.

Alas ! I cannot solve such contraries :  
But yesterday they told you you must die,  
And now there is vouchsaf'd you greater freedom.  
I've heard it held that then our bonds are loos'd  
When we attain our everlasting peace.

MARY.—(*The horn is heard.*)

Hear'st thou the hunting horn, hear'st thou the welkin  
ring ?

Loud sounds the halloo the woods thro' and plain :  
Had I my palfrey now, blithe on his back to spring,  
Soon would I follow and join the glad train !  
The well known sounds come sadly o'er my ear,  
And bitter thoughts supply—

Oft in the highlands, the heather among,  
I gallop'd the foremost of all the wild throng,  
While echo resounded our shouts to the sky !

*Enter—*PAULET.

PAULET.

Now have I acted right, at last, my lady ?  
Do I deserve your thanks ?

MARY.

Was't you, Sir Knight,  
Who have procur'd me this enlargement—you ?





PAULET.

Why should it not be me ? I come from Court,  
And did present your letter.

MARY.

Did you give it,  
Did you, indeed, and is the liberty  
I now enjoy the fruits ?

PAULET.

Not that alone,  
Prepare yourself for something greater still !

MARY.

Greater, how so ? what would you, Sir, announce ?

PAULET.

You heard the horn just now ?

MARY.

You make me tremble.

PAULET.

Hard by the Queen enjoys the chace.

MARY.

How ! Sir !

PAULET.

In a few moments, p'rhaps, she'll stand before you.

KENNEDY.

*(Runs towards Mary who trembles and seems fainting)*

You turn pale noble Lady, what is't ails you ?

PAULET.

Why how now, Lady, have I done amiss ?  
Did you not ask it ? It is sooner granted  
Than you had hop'd :—You are not wont be mute ;  
Now is the time to try your eloquence ?

MARY.

Why was I not appriz'd of this before ?  
I am not now prepar'd—oh ! no, not now—  
What I have sought for as my greatest good,  
Appears now to me terrible—disastrous.  
Come Hannah, lead me quickly to the house,  
That I may summon courage to support me.

PAULET.

Wait, it is here you must expect her—go not.  
That you are suff'ring I can well imagine,  
Since you are now t'appear before your judge !

*Enter—*SHREWSBURY.

MARY.

That's not the cause, my feelings are far other.  
Oh ! noble Shrewsbury, as my better angel  
You come, Heaven sent. I cannot, cannot see her—  
Save me, oh save me from the hateful sight.

SHREWSBURY.

Bear up, O Queen ! compose your flutter'd spirits ;  
This is the hour decisive of your fate.

MARY.

I've panted for this moment ; many a year  
Prepar'd myself to meet it—all have I  
Rehears'd, and graven on my memory,  
How I might move her, and excite her pity :  
Now all's effac'd, and suddenly forgotten.  
Naught at this moment stirs within my breast,  
But burning rage for my long-borne afflictions.  
My whole heart is converted into hate—  
Strong hate against her—all my kindlier thoughts  
Are fled, and demons with their snaky locks  
Seem to surround me from their dread abode.

SHREWSBURY.

Master this wild excitement of your blood—  
Suppress this bitterness of heart. It yields  
No wholesome fruit when hate doth strive with hate.  
Howe'er your inward feelings are against it,  
List to what time and circumstance require.  
She is the mightier far—submit yourself  
To her—

MARY.

Oh ! it's impossible—

SHREWSBURY.

Yet do so,  
Speak with respect and with composure to her.

Implore her noble mindedness—don't brave her  
Nor stand upon your right—'tis not the time.

MARY.

Alas ! I've courted my destruction, and  
This my request will turn unto my ruin.  
We never should have seen each other—never—  
Thence good to either never can arise.  
As well might fire and water meet in peace ;  
The tiger harmlessly embrace the lamb.  
I am too deeply injur'd—she has wrong'd  
Too far. Forgiveness is not for such foes !

SHREWSBURY.

First see her face. I noted her when first  
She held your letter, how she was affected ;  
The tears swam in her eyes—she wants not feeling—  
And, therefore, cherish greater confidence.  
I have no purpose—that I came the first  
But to prepare you, and exhort you patience.

MARY—(*Taking his hand.*)

Oh, Talbot, you were ever friendly to me ;  
Would I had staid in your mild custody :  
I have been hardly treated, Shrewsbury.

SHREWSBURY.

Forget it now : think only in what way  
You may receive her with submissive reverence.

M

MARY.

Is Burleigh, ever my bad angel, with her?

SHREWSBURY.

She has no suite, but only the Lord Leicester.

MARY.

Lord Leicester!

SHREWSBURY.

Fear not—he is not of those  
That will your death—the scheme was plan'd by him  
By which you come in presence of the Queen.

MARY.

Alas! I knew it well.

SHREWSBURY.

What say you Lady?

PAULET.

The Queen is coming.

SCENE IV.—THE ABOVE.

ELIZABETH, LEICESTER, *and suite.*

ELIZABETH.

How call you these environs?

LEICESTER.

Fotheringay.

ELIZABETH.

Send forward our attendants of the chase

To London. Our good people crowd about us  
Something too much—we'll enter this still park :  
My subjects are too loving ; their affection  
Is more like worship and idolatry,  
And is not meet for mortals, but for Gods.

MARY.

*(Aside.)*

Oh ! God, those traits bespeak no kindly breast !

ELIZABETH.

Who is the Lady ?

LEICESTER.

We're at Fotheringay—

ELIZABETH.

Who has contriv'd this trick for me, Lord Leicester ?

LEICESTER.

'Tis now too late, most gracious Queen, so now  
Fancy your steps are Heav'n directed hither :  
Be gen'rous, and let your pity triumph.

SHREWSBURY.

Now yield to our entreaties, royal Dame ;  
And cast your eyes on this unhappy Princess,  
Who bows herself before you.

ELIZABETH.

How my Lords !

Who was it that describ'd one all submission ?  
I find a haughty female, whom misfortune

Hath made more proud, not humbled to the dust !

MARY.

*(To Leicester and Shrewsbury.)*

I will, good gentlemen, e'en bend to this,

(Hence aspirations of a noble soul !)

I will no more remember what I am,

Nor what I've suffer'd. I'll fall down to her.

*(She kneels.)*

The Heavens have favor'd you, my royal sister ;

The crown of victory adorns your brow ;

I bend before the power divine in you.

But yet be gen'rous. Good, my Sister, let me,

Like something vile, not grovel on the ground ?

Stretch forth your hand in royal clemency,

And raise me from this deep humiliation.

ELIZABETH.

You're where you ought to be, my Lady Mary ;

And thanks be to a gracious Providence,

Which hath not will'd that it should be my fate

To occupy the place where now you lie.

MARY,

Think on the turns of fortune here below—

Think there are powers above to punish pride,

Nor scorn a warning from the awful change

That casts me at your feet ! For your own sake,

Before these Lords, honor yourself in me.  
Oh do not put to shame the blood of Tudor,  
Which warms my vitals, as it flows in yours.  
(Oh God of Heaven !) remain not rugged thus,  
As inaccessible as is the rock  
Which mocks the efforts of the stranded wretch  
While struggling there for safety. Though my lot,  
My life, my all, depends upon my words,  
And the mute eloquence of streaming eyes,  
Oh ! shut not up my heart by shutting yours—  
That withering look will dry up in my breast  
The plenteous source from whence my tears would flow ;  
Fill me with shudd'ring coldness, and arrest,  
When needed most, the current of my soul,

ELIZABETH.

What has the Lady Stuart to impart ?  
You wish'd an audience, and I now forget  
The oft, and sore offended Sovereign,  
To fill the pious duty of a Sister,  
And deign the favor of an interview !  
Justly, may censure satirize the deed,  
Which generosity demeans me to,  
Since well you know you oft have sought my life !

MARY.

How shall I best begin—how guide my words



With skill to gain, and not to wound her heart!  
O! God! inspire my speech, and soften all  
That might offend by seeming to be harsh:  
Though 'tis scarce possible that my defence  
Should not (for that I would not) censure you.  
You've treated me unseemly; I am  
A Queen, like you—and kept me prisoner;  
I came a suppliant into this your kingdom,  
And you, contemning hospitality,  
Setting at naught a people's sacred rights,  
Immur'd me in a dungeon's darksome gloom,  
My friends and my domestics sent far from me,  
And push'd privation e'en to the extreme:  
The last of insults was a shameless trial.  
No more of this—let all be buried now—  
My wrongs, my sufferings, in a deep oblivion.  
Henceforth I'll call them but my destiny—  
Nor give you blame, nor take it to myself.  
Some evil spirit rose from the abyss  
And lit up hatred in our tender hearts;  
Which from our earliest youth were thus estrang'd.  
This grew still with our growth, till vill'nous mouths  
Blew the unhappy sparks into a flame!  
Mad zealots arm'd their unrequired hands,  
And grasp'd the public sword, and secret dagger.

Such is the hapless lot of Kings—their quarrels

Divide a world in bloody opposition,

And all the infernal furies share the havock !

*(Mary approaches her, and with a flattering tone continues.)*

We now have none to misinterpret us,

We now are in the presence of each other,

And Sisters speak—name to me my crime,

And I will my defence as freely make.

Oh ! had you then vouchsaf'd an audience,

When I so press'd admittance to your sight,

Much had been spar'd—nor had this gloomy place

Witness'd th' unhappiness of such a meeting !

ELIZABETH.

May my good stars still shield me from the folly

Of cherishing a viper in my bosom !

Blame not your fortune, but your own bad heart :—

The mad ambition of your haughty house.

When naught of enmity was yet between us,

That proud imperious Priest, the Guise, your Uncle,

Whose hand adventurous reaches at all Crowns,

Threw down the gauntlet to me—counsell'd you

T' assume the arms of England and my title ;

And joining all he could in league against me,

The churchman's eloquence, the warrior's sword,

The murderous steel of heated fanatics,  
He tri'd the conflict to the uttermost.  
E'en on the peaceful shores of this my realm  
Did he light up the flames of insurrection :—  
But God was with me, and the haughty Priest  
Fled vanquish'd from the field. 'Twas at my head  
The blow was aim'd, and your's receives the stroke.

MARY.

I'm in God's hand, but, surely, you will not  
End your success with such a bloody period ?

ELIZABETH.

Who shall prevent me ? 'Twas your Uncle gave  
The example to all Princes of the world.  
The day of St. Bartholomew instructs us  
How peace should be preserv'd with enemies.  
What are a people's rights, or kindred's claims  
The church can sever every social tie,  
And hallow treachery and regicide ?  
I only follow where your churchmen lead :—  
Say what security is mine, if I  
Magnanimously loose your bonds—your faith—  
What Castle's gates are strong enough to hold,  
Since that St. Peter's keys can soon unlock them !  
In force alone security is mine ;  
For with the serpent's kind is no communion.

MARY.

Thus are your sad suspicions ever boding—  
You ever have, as foreigner and foe,  
Estrang'd me from your heart. Had you but  
Acknowledg'd me your heir, as is my due,  
Then in affection, as affinity,  
Both love and gratitude had kept me firm.

ELIZABETH.

Your friendship is for other lands, my Lady ;  
'Tis with the Popedom, that you hold alliance :—  
Monks are your brethren. You my heir acknowledg'd !  
Oh ! treacherous cunning of a false Armida !  
Who in my life time sought to warp my people,  
And draw our gallant youths into her toils ;  
With adoration of the rising sun  
To film their eyes, whilst I—

MARY.

Still reign in peace.

All my pretensions to these realms I wave—  
My spirit's eagle wings hang drooping now ;  
Ambition's lost her charms. The chance is yours.  
I am but now the shadow of Queen Mary.  
The dungeon's languor has subdu'd the mind  
That cherish'd glory. All that rigour could  
Is done, and I am blasted in my bloom.

Here be the end then, Sister ; say the word,  
(The word for which you've given me this meeting,  
For I can ne'er surmise that you are come  
Fiercely to triumph o'er a fallen victim,)  
Say but the word—say Mary you are free—  
You, that have felt my power, now learn to feel  
My magnanimity exceeds my might !  
Say so, and I will hold my life and freedom,  
As the free gift of your bestowing hand :  
One word unmakes the past, and I await it.  
But oh ! be not too long the hope deferr'd :  
And woe is you, if ought but this you end in—  
If you do not, like to some angel form,  
Departing leave a blessing. Oh ! my Sister,  
Not for the riches of this beauteous Isle—  
Not for all countries that the sea begirts,  
Would I look so on you, as you on me.

ELIZABETH.

And do you own at length that you are vanquish'd—  
Your arts all worthless. Is no murder toward ?  
Is now no chiv'rous champion to be found,  
To wager life in your adventurous strife ?  
No, all is over, Lady Mary. You  
Seduce no more my people, other thoughts  
Employ the busy. No one courts your love,

Nor seeks your nuptials, as a fourth successor.  
For now 'tis plain, that paramours and husbands  
Perish alike !

MARY.       *(Much agitated.)*

Oh ! grant me patience, Heaven !

ELIZABETH.

And these are then the wond'rous charms, Lord Leicester,

'Gainst which impunity in man is hopeless :  
And still more hopeless woman's competition ?  
Truly, a reputation is soon won ;  
It costs not much to be the general beauty,  
As what is general is for every one !

MARY.

This is too much.

ELIZABETH.

*(Laughing scornfully.)*

Behold the mask thrown off,  
And now we see the visage as it is !

MARY.

*(Glowing with anger, yet with a dignified air.)*

My faults were those of youth, and human kind,  
'Twas power betray'd me. Nothing I dissembl'd,  
Or sought to hide, all false appearances  
Have I despis'd, with royal fearlessness.

What can be known is known of me, and I  
Can truly say I'm better than my fame.  
But when from you the broider'd cloak is torn,  
Which glittering royalty opposes now  
How will your wanton deeds then stand reveal'd ?  
It was not chastity your mother taught you ;  
And 'tis well known for which of all her virtues,  
Queen Anne Boleyn was condemn'd to die !

SHREWSBURY.

*(Interposing.)*

Oh ! God of Heaven—is it come to this ?  
Is this the moderation, the submission—  
My Lady Mary ?

MARY.

Moderation ! oh,  
I've borne the utmost human kind can bear—  
“ Away to Heaven respective lenity,  
“ And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now.”\*  
And thou, who gav'st the anger'd Basilisk  
His deadly gaze, now pour upon my tongue  
Thy poisonous venom—

SHREWSBURY.

Oh she's not herself !  
Pardon the madness of her strong excitement.

\* Romeo and Juliet—Act 3rd, Scene 1st.

LEICESTER.

Hear not her raving, come, away, away ;  
Let's hasten from this unblest, fatal spot.

MARY.

A bastard has usurped England's Throne,  
And the high-minded, and free British people  
Are by a cunning jugglery betray'd.  
If right prevail'd, you now would lick the dust  
Before my feet, for I'm the lawful Queen.

*(Exeunt Elizabeth, Leicester, and Shrewsbury.)*

SCENE V.

MARY and KENNEDY.

KENNEDY.

What have you done—sh' has left us in a rage,  
Now all is over—all our hopes are lost.

MARY.

She's gone in rage—but her life's blood I've drawn  
At length I glory, Hannah ; now at length,  
After whole years of deepest degradation,  
A moment comes of triumph, and revenge :  
A mountain falls from my oppressed heart,  
And with my dagger's point I pierce her bosom.

KENNEDY.

Unhappy you—distraction has undone you :



You have provoked one implacable—  
 She rules the land, and bears the bolt of Heav'n;  
 Before her paramour you have reproach'd her.

MARY.

In Leicester's eyes have I dishonor'd her,  
 And he was witness of my victory.  
 He saw her struck down from her pride of place—  
 His presence 'twas that gave me power to wound.

SCENE VI.—THE ABOVE AND MORTIMER.

KENNEDY.

Oh! Sir, how sad a termination.

MORTIMER.

I,

Heard all. You triumph'd, hurl'd her to the dust—  
 You were the monarch—she the criminal:  
 Your courage charms me—like a Deity  
 I worship you—you now are truly great.

MARY.

Spoke you with Leicester—did you give to him  
 My letter, and my present—Speak Sir, speak?

MORTIMER.

*(Beholding her with inflamed looks.)*

How well this noble royal scorn becomes you—  
 How dazzling is your beauty to my view:  
 Sure you are fair beyond all woman kind.

MARY.

I pray you, Sir, to pardon my impatience—

What said my Lord—Oh ! tell me what to hope ?

MORTIMER.

He ! he's nothing but a wretched recreant :

Hope naught from him—despise him and forget him.

MARY.

What is't you say ?

MORTIMER.

He put himself in peril ! First he shall

Dispute the point with me in mortal strife.

MARY.

Then have you not deliver'd him my letter ?

Oh ! all is over !

MORTIMER.

Coward ! he loves life.

He who'd preserve you, and would call you his,

Must venture bravely to embrace his death.

MARY.

He'll do naught for me then ?

MORTIMER.

No more of him ;

What can he do, or wherein is he needed ?

I'll save you singly—

MARY.

Oh! what can you do?

MORTIMER.

Deceive yourself no more—as if to day  
All was expectant, as 'twas yesterday.  
The Queen's retiring from you as she did,  
Soon as the conversation grew so hot,  
Shews all is lost—no place for pardon left.  
Now is the time for action. Force decides,  
And all must now be risk'd—all is at stake.  
Free must you be ere yet the morning dawn.

MARY.

What may you mean, this night? impossible!

MORTIMER.

Listen how 'tis resolv'd—I have assembl'd  
Within a secret chapel my companions;  
A priest hath there confess'd us, and we have  
An absolution for all crimes, the which  
We may commit—a pardon in advance  
For every thing that we may chance to hazard.  
We have receiv'd the church's latest rights,  
And now are ready for the last adventure.

MARY.

Alas! a frightful preparation!

MORTIMER.

We scale this Castle in the dead of night ;  
The keys are in my power, and we murder  
The guards, and bear you from your prison house.  
They all must fall beneath our slaughtering hands—  
All living souls, that none remain to tell  
The tale, or to report our robbery.

MARY.

And Drury, Paulet—both my prison keepers !  
Oh ! they will sooner their last drop of blood—

MORTIMER.

They first must fall, beneath my dagger's point.

MARY.

What, he, your Uncle, and your second Father !

MORTIMER.

My hand shall end him—I'm his murderer—

MARY.

What bloody treachery !

MORTIMER.

All treasons are

Pardon'd ere done. I may perform the utmost,  
And this I will do.

MARY.

Oh ! dreadful, dreadful !

MORTIMER.

My dagger too must pierce Elizabeth—  
For so upon the eucharist I've sworn.

MARY.

Ere that for me so much blood shall be spilt—

MORTIMER.

Oh what is life, in paragon with thee,  
Or with my love! Let the earth loose her bounds,  
And pour a second deluge on creation!  
Nothing can move me. Ere I thee renounce,  
Of all things come the final dissolution.

MARY.

Wild words are these, and wilder still your looks!  
You fright me and oblige me to retire.

MORTIMER.

Life's but a moment, and a moment death!  
Let them to Tyburn drag me—limb by limb.  
The burning tongs my body lacerate.  
Let me but hold thee in my arms, thou lov'd one!

MARY.

Madman, avaunt!

MORTIMER.

Upon that lovely breast—  
On that love breathing lip—

MARY.

For God's sake, Sir,  
Do not oppose my entrance to my chamber.

MORTIMER.

He's but a fool, whose happiness escapes him  
Which some kind God hath given to his embrace.  
Save you, I will, and risk a thousand lives.  
But what I save, I swear, I will enjoy.

MARY.

Oh ! will no God, or Angel, now befriend me ?  
What dreadful fate is mine that thus consigns me  
From one calamity unto another ?  
Was I then born to be the butt of passions ?  
That love and hate should work me like alarm ?

MORTIMER.

As much they burn in hate, as I in love—  
They would behead thee, and the snowy whiteness  
Of that fair neck disfigure with the axe.  
O freely then give to the God of love,  
What else to hate must be the sacrifice !  
With these fair charms, which are no longer thine,  
Bless an advent'rous, and adoring lover.  
The bright locks of that beauteous, silken hair,  
Already are the prize of grisly death.  
Oh ! let them form the knot that binds thy slave.

MARY.

What horrid words must I give ear to, Sir.  
My sufferings and misfortunes should be sacred,  
Though you regard not this my crowned head.

MORTIMER.

The Kingly crown is fallen from thy brow :  
No more of earthly Majesty is left thee :  
Try it, and issue forth thy royal mandate,  
And see if any friend start up, and save thee ?  
Naught now remains, but dignity of mien,  
And the supremacy of Heav'nly beauty—  
These give me strength to risk, and overcome—  
And thrust me where the murderous axe may fall.

MARY.

Oh ! who will save me from his furious heat.

MORTIMER.

A bold attempt as boldly asks its price.  
Why is the hero prodigal of blood ?  
Since life is of the living the great good,  
He is a madman who will give't for naught.  
I'll first repose me on thy throbbing breast.

*(He presses her to his bosom.)*

MARY.

Must I implore for succour 'gainst the man  
Who would preserve me ?

MORTIMER.

Thou'rt not passionless !

The general voice accuses not thy rigour :

The ardent couch of love has charms for thee :

The singer Rizzio had his taste of bliss—

And e'en that Bothwell dar'd to bear thee off.

MARY.

Audacious !

MORTIMER.

He was but thy tyrant—

And if thou lov'dst, thou fearedst him much more.

If then intimidation can prevail,

By the infernal Powers !

MARY.

Begone, thou ravest.

MORTIMER.

I will take leave to make thee tremble too—

KENNEDY *enters hastily.*

KENNEDY.

They come—they're here—the garden is now full  
Of armed men.

MORTIMER.

I will defend you.

MARY.

Oh save me, Hannah, from his furious hands—



Unhappy me where shall I find refuge?  
To which of all the Saints shall I address me?  
Rage stalks without, and murder lurks within!

*(Hastens into the house, Kennedy follows.)*

SCENE VII.

*Enter—PAULET.*

PAULET.

Bar all the gates, and draw the bridges up—

MORTIMER.

What is it Uncle?

PAULET.

Where's the murderess?

Plunge her this instant in the darkest dungeon.

MORTIMER.

What is there—what has happen'd?

PAULET.

The Queen!

Accursed hands, and devilish treachery!

MORTIMER.

The Queen, say you? What Queen?

PAULET.

*(Goes in hastily.)*

The Queen of England.

She has been murder'd on the road to London.

MORTIMER.

Is my mind wand'ring? methought one came

And cri'd aloud—the Queen is murdered !  
No ! 'twas a dream—the fever of my blood  
Made to my senses plain and palpable,  
What my imagination had conceiv'd.  
Who comes there ? 'tis O'Kelly—so disordered ?

*Enter—O'KELLY.*

O'KELLY.

Fly, Mortimer, for all is lost.

MORTIMER.

What's lost ?

O'KELLY.

Question me not—but quickly quit the place !

MORTIMER.

What then has happen'd ?

O'KELLY.

Savage, like a madman,

Would strike the blow.

MORTIMER.

Indeed, is't true ?

O'KELLY.

Too true,

So quickly save yourself.

MORTIMER.

Is she despatch'd.

And does Queen Mary mount the throne of England ?

O'KELLY.

Despatch'd ? who said so ?

MORTIMER.

You yourself.

O'KELLY.

She lives—

And you, and I, and all of us are dead.

MORTIMER.

She lives !

O'KELLY.

The blow fell harmless, turn'd aside  
By her thick mantle—Shrewsbury disarm'd him.

MORTIMER.

She lives ?

O'KELLY.

Lives yet, and will destroy us all.  
Away, the park already is surrounded.

MORTIMER.

Who was it did the deed so rashly ?

O'KELLY.

The Monk

From Toulon, whom you saw i'the chapel—thoughtful  
And wrapt the while th' anathema was read,  
Wherein the Pope devotes the Queen of England.  
He thought to seize the earliest, shortest means

To free the Church of God by one bold stroke,  
And for himself achieve the martyr's crown.  
The Priest alone was in his confidence ;—  
The act took place upon the road to London.

MORTIMER—(*After a pause.*)

Alas ! unfortunate thy doom is seal'd,  
And cruelly wilt thou be made to perish ;  
Thy destiny itself conspires thy fall.

O' KELLY.

Say, whither will you fly ? I'll hide myself  
Amid the thickest forests of the north.

MORTIMER.

Fly, and may God accompany your flight ;  
I will remain with purpose still to save,  
Or failing that, to share with her the grave !

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

## ACT IV.

### SCENE I.—ANTICHAMBER.

COUNT AUBESPINE, KENT, *and* LEICESTER.

AUBESPINE.

How fares it with her Majesty my Lord ?  
You see me quite bewilder'd with affright : —  
How came it—or how could it ever happen  
Amongst a loyal people ?

LEICESTER.

It has happen'd,  
Through none of our own people. He that did it  
Was the born subject of your King—a Frenchman !

AUBESPINE.

'Twas, certainly, some madman—

KENT.

'Twas a Papist,  
Count Aubespine !

*Enter—BURLEIGH speaking to* DAVISON.

Without loss of time  
The warrant must be made out, and the seal

Affix'd—this being done, brought to the Queen  
For signature, and this without delay.

DAVISON.

It shall be done.

*(Exit.)*

AUBESPINE to BURLEIGH.

My Lord, my loyal heart  
Shares in the honest joy of the whole Isle.  
The Heavens be prais'd that warded from her head  
The blow the murd'rous villain aim'd at it !

BURLEIGH.

Praise be to him, who turns to their own shame  
Our enemies' crimes !

AUBESPINE.

May the great God confound  
The perpetrator of this cursed deed !

BURLEIGH.

The perpetrator, and the vill'nous plotter !

AUBESPINE to KENT.

May 't please your lordship, my Lord Mareschall,  
To introduce me to the royal presence,  
To lay the gratulations of my master,  
As is my duty, at your Sov'reigns feet ?

BURLEIGH.

Trouble yourself no more, Count !

AUBESPINE.

My Lord Burleigh,  
I know the obligation which—

BURLEIGH.

Obliges you  
To quit this Island with your utmost speed.

AUBESPINE.

What? how is this? (*Retreating amazed.*)

BURLEIGH.

Your privileg'd character  
Shields you to-day—but not for one day longer.

AUBESPINE.

And what's my crime?

BURLEIGH.

Should I giv't a name,  
By all 'twould be confess'd without remission.

AUBESPINE.

The rights my Lord, of an Ambassador,—

BURLEIGH.

Protect,—but not a traitor to the realm.

KENT *and* LEICESTER.

Ah! What is this?

AUBESPINE.

My Lord, consider well.

BURLEIGH.

The assassin had a passport, giv'n by you,  
Hid in his pocket—

KENT.

Is it possible?

AUBESPINE.

Many the passports that are given by me ;  
I cannot look into men's secret thoughts.

BURLEIGH.

The murderer had confess'd in your Hotel!

AUBESPINE.

My house is open—

BURLEIGH.

T' all the foes of England—

AUBESPINE.

I seek enquiry.

BURLEIGH.

Tremble to obtain it.

AUBESPINE.

My Monarch is affronted in my person ;  
The treaty just concluded is broke off.

BURLEIGH.

The Queen herself hath put an end to it :  
England with France will not contract alliance.  
My Lord of Kent, 'tis your especial charge



To see the Count in safety to the shore.  
The populace, enraged, hath his Hotel  
Attack'd, and found an arsenal of arms.  
They threaten they will tear him limb from limb  
If he appear :—You, therefore, must conceal him,  
'Till the storm passes. You're responsible.

AUBESPINE.

I go, and leave this land, where the just rights  
A people claims are trodden underfoot ;  
And treaties scoff'd at. My royal Master will  
Take bloody vengeance.

BURLEIGH.

Let him come, and take it !

*Exeunt Kent and Aubespine.*

*Manent*—LEICESTER and BURLEIGH.

LEICESTER.

So thus you lightly sever bonds asunder  
Which cost you so much toil to knit together !  
England with little thanks may pay the pains  
Which you, my Lord, have taken thus in vain.

BURLEIGH.

My aim was honest : Heav'n had not decreed so—  
Happy are those who have no worse to rue.

LEICESTER.

We know how full of mystery Cecil looks

When he delinquencies of State hath scented.  
This is a golden opportunity ;  
A treas'nous conspiracy is form'd ;  
The actors still are in their hiding places.  
Now will a court of inquisition be  
Forthwith erected—words and looks be canvass'd,  
And even thoughts expos'd to that tribunal.  
There you're the all in all—the mighty Atlas  
Who bear our England's orb upon your shoulders.

BURLEIGH.

In you, my Lord, I do confess my master ;  
For never victory did I achieve,  
Such as your powerful eloquence has won !

LEICESTER.

What mean you, Lord ?

BURLEIGH.

Why you, my Lord, found means  
Behind my back, to lure our royal Mistress  
To Fotheringay Park.

LEICESTER.

How behind your back !  
When did my actions shun your keen research ?

BURLEIGH.

'Twas then the Queen, belike, who led you thither—  
Not you the Queen—'twas she who condescended  
To bring you thither !

LEICESTER.

What would you imply?

BURLEIGH.

The goodly part the Queen had there to play—  
The noble triumph which her trust, and truth  
Have been repay'd with. Good confiding Princess,  
Without remorse, or shame are you abus'd!  
With what unfeeling wantonness betray'd!  
This then's the gen'rous pity, which in council  
So suddenly possess'd itself of you!  
This made the Stuart seem so weak a foe,  
And so contemptible, the fear were lost  
That would decide her death! A fine conceit—  
'Tis pity that so fine an edge should fail!

LEICESTER.

Unworthy—follow me—at the Queen's throne  
We'll try which has most powerful arguments.

BURLEIGH.

There shall you find me—and look well, my Lord,  
That your own eloquence be not at fault.

*(Exit Burleigh.)*

LEICESTER—*(Solus.)*

I am discover'd—seen through! How came it  
That this blood-hunter hit upon my track!  
Woe's me if he have proofs; and if the Queen

Hath learnt my dealings with her rival, Mary.  
Oh! Heavens, how base must I—how void of truth  
Must seem my counsel, and my luckless haste  
To Fotheringay that brought her! She will seem  
By me expos'd to cruel mockery;  
Betray'd into the hands of her worst foe!  
O! never, never, can she pardon this!  
All will now seem premeditated—even  
The bitter sarcasms of their conversation—  
The triumph and derision she display'd—  
E'en the assassin's hand (disastrous chance,  
And least expected!) will seem arm'd by me.  
No refuge see I—no where—ha! who comes?  
*(Mortimer enters in violent agitation, and looks narrowly about.)*

MORTIMER.

Lord Leicester is it you, and none beside?

LEICESTER.

Away ill omen'd youth, what make you here?

MORTIMER.

They dog us at the heel—and seek you too—  
Look to your safety!

LEICESTER.

Hence, begone!

MORTIMER.

They know

There was a meeting at Count Aubespine's  
In secret held—

LEICESTER.

What's that to me?

MORTIMER.

Th' assassin

Was there—

LEICESTER.

The affair is yours, rash man—

Whence this audacity that makes me complice  
In bloody plots? defend your own vile deeds.

MORTIMER.

Give me but hearing?

LEICESTER.

Hence away—avaunt—

Why do you thus, like a malignant spirit,  
Haunt where I move—hence, hence, I know you not—  
I've naught in common with a murderer.

MORTIMER.

You will not hear me—I am come to warn you—  
The course you've follow'd is betrayed—

LEICESTER.

Ha !

MORTIMER.

The Lord High Treasurer was at Fotheringay  
Soon as the misadventure had transpir'd—  
A vig'lant search was made in Mary's chamber,  
And there was found—

LEICESTER.

What ?

MORTIMER.

A half-writ letter

Address'd to you.

LEICESTER.

Illfated and imprudent !

MORTIMER.

In which sh' adjures you to keep word with her,  
Renews the former promise of her hand—  
Mentions the portrait—

LEICESTER.

Oh ! death and damnation !

MORTIMER.

Lord Burleigh has the letter.

LEICESTER.

I am lost !

*(Walks backwards and forwards in despair.)*

MORTIMER.

Seize on the moment—be beforehand with him.

Save both yourself and her. Invent excuses—

Swear you are innocent—prevent the worst.

I can no more. All my accomplices

Are scatter'd—and our league is quite dissolv'd.

I will to Scotland, and seek out my friends.

'Tis yours to try what power your presence has,

Or what command your brow.

LEICESTER.

That will I do.

What, ho! the guard here— (*Calls the guard.*)

Seize upon this traitor,

Place him in close arrest, and guard him well,

An infamous conspiracy's discover'd :

I'll carry to the Queen the news myself.

(*Exit Leicester.*)

MORTIMER—(*Looking after him.*)

Oh! shameless villain—but I have deserv'd it

Who plac'd my confidence in one so base!

My neck affords the passage for his foot,

And my fall is the plank for his escape.

Then save thyself—my lips shall still be clos'd :

I will not draw thee with me to destruction ;

And e'en in death I scorn alliance with thee.

Life is the only good the wicked have !

*(To the guards.)*

What would ye, ye vile Satellites of tyrants !

Ye, and your might I laugh at—I am free.

*(Shewing a dagger.)*

OFFICER.

See, he is armed. Wrench his dagger from him !

MORTIMER.

To the last moment free shall be my heart,  
And what it prompts as free my tongue shall say :  
Curses and woe light on ye, who your God  
And rightful Sov'reign have deserted—who  
Alike the earthly Mary have renounc'd,  
As faithless ye have left the heav'nly one.  
Who to this bastard Queen have sold yourselves—

OFFICER.

Hear you his blasphemy—this instant seize him.

MORTIMER.

Oh ! lov'd one, I had not the pow'r to save,  
But I will bravely leave thee an example.

*(Stabs himself.)*

SCENE CLOSES.



## SCENE—THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER.

*Enter ELIZABETH with a letter, followed by BURLEIGH.*

ELIZABETH.

To drag me thither—make my royal person  
His laughing stock. The traitor! and in triumph  
Thus to parade me 'fore his paramour!  
Was ever woman so betray'd, Lord Burleigh?

BURLEIGH.

'Tis inconceivable by what strange weight—  
What witchcraft rather—he hath so prevail'd  
Thus to surprize the wisdom of my Queen—  
To hoodwink and confound—

ELIZABETH.

Oh! I shall die with shame.

How must he scoff at, and despise my folly:  
I thought to humble her, and was myself  
The butt, and aim of her keen ridicule.

BURLEIGH.

You will perceive the advice I gave was just.

ELIZABETH.

I'm justly punish'd who have thus estrang'd me  
From your wise counsel. Could I think him faithless,  
Or his vow'd love but a perfidious wile?  
Whom can I trust, if he is treacherous?  
He, whom I've made the greatest 'mongst the great,

Plac'd him in the recesses of my heart ;  
Allow'd him to assume i'th Court the bearing,  
The guise and semblance of a King, and Master !

BURLEIGH.

The while he basely was betraying you  
To this dissembling, and false Queen of Scotland !

ELIZABETH.

Oh ! she shall make atonement with her blood—  
Say is the warrant ready ?

BURLEIGH.

'Tis prepar'd

As you commanded.

ELIZABETH.

Yes, now die she must—

He shall behold her fall, and fall himself—  
At last I have displac'd him from my heart ;  
Love hath now left it for revenge to fill :  
As he stood high, and lofty in degree,  
So deeply shall he sink in degradation :—  
He now shall be my monument of wrath,  
As 'foretime the memorial of my weakness !  
Conduct him to the tower—he now shall prove  
Whate'er of rigour Laws can visit with.

BURLEIGH.

He'll force an audience, and absolve himself.

ELIZABETH.

Absolve himself! What plea has he to urge?  
Is not the letter proof of what he's done,  
Clear as the day?

BURLEIGH.

But you are kind, and gracious,  
His powerful presence, and his witching look—

ELIZABETH.

I will behold him never, never more,  
Have you given order to forbid his entrance?

BURLEIGH.

'Tis so commanded, Queen.

PAGE *enters and announces*

The Earl of Leicester.

ELIZABETH.

(*To the Page.*)

Presumptuous! say I will not see him.

PAGE.

Such a command I dare not tell my Lord,  
And he would not believe me, if I did.

ELIZABETH.

Have I then rais'd him to so high a place,

That thus my servants tremble at his frown,  
More than at mine ?

BURLEIGH—(*addressing the Page.*)

The Queen forbids his coming.

(*Exit Page.*)

ELIZABETH.

If it were possible—if he could urge  
Some justifying cause. Say, might it not  
A stratagem be which Mary had devis'd  
To sow dissention 'twixt me and my friend ?  
Oh ! she's of cheats the most refin'd, and cunning !  
She may have fram'd the letter to empoison  
My breast with doubts, and with dishonour load  
Him whom she hates.

BURLEIGH.

But, consider, Queen—

(*Leicester throws open the door with violence and  
enters with a haughty mien.*)

LEICESTER.

Shew me the man who's bold enough to say  
The chamber of my Queen is interdicted.

ELIZABETH.

Ha ! What presumption's this ?

LEICESTER.

To warn me hence—

If she is visible for such as Burleigh,  
She must be so for me.

BURLEIGH.

You're too bold, my Lord,  
To force an entrance here without permission !

LEICESTER.

You are too hardy Lord, to use that word  
Permission—what ? There's no one in this Court  
Thoro' whose organ it can be pronounc'd  
That leave is given to the Earl of Leicester !

*(Turning to the Queen with a submissive look.)*

From the mouth only of my Sov'reign will I—

ELIZABETH.

*(Without looking at him.)*

Forth from my presence false and faithless man !

LEICESTER.

In these reproachful words I recognize  
Not my kind Sov'reign, good Elizabeth,  
But my foe, Burleigh. I appeal unto  
You, my Elizabeth. You give him ear,  
I claim the like.

ELIZABETH.

Speak then, dissembler, speak ;  
Double thy treacherous dealing, and belie him.

LEICESTER. (*To Burleigh.*)

Retire my Lord. What I have to impart  
Unto my Queen is for ourselves alone.

ELIZABETH. (*To Burleigh.*)

Remain—'tis my command.

LEICESTER.

What would a third  
'Twixt thee and me ? With my respected Queen  
I have to reckon. I but advocate  
My dignity of office—sacred rights  
Which I insist on. So let the Lord go.

ELIZABETH.

Do these proud scornful words become you ?

LEICESTER.

Well

Do they become me. I'm the happy he  
Whom your kind favour hath preferr'd, and rais'd  
High above him, and higher than them all.  
Your heart bestow'd upon me this precedence ;  
And, what your love has giv'n, by Heav'n ! will I  
Guard, as a treasure dearer than my life.

Let him retire. A pair of moments will  
Suffice for explanation 'twixt us twain.

ELIZABETH.

You hope in vain to guile me with your cunning.

LEICESTER.

The wordy orator might seek to guile you ;  
I will alone address me to your heart ;  
And what I risk'd in confidence of favour  
Will in your bosom find its full acquittal :  
On this your leaning to me I rely.

ELIZABETH.

O lost to reputation —this it is

That most condemns you. *(To Burleigh.)*

My Lord shew the letter.

BURLEIGH—*(Giving the letter.)*

LEICESTER. *(Looking at it.)*

The Stuart's writing.

ELIZABETH.

Read—and then be dumb.

*(Leicester having read the letter composedly.)*

The appearance is against me, but I hope  
You will not judge me on appearances.

ELIZABETH.

Can you deny your secret correspondence,

That you receiv'd the portrait of the Stuart,  
And rais'd in her the hope of a deliverance?

LEICESTER.

If I felt guilty, 'twere not difficult  
Soon to rebut the evidence of foes—  
But, conscience whole, I readily acknowledge  
That she speaks truth.

ELIZABETH.

Now then, perfidious wretch!

BURLEIGH.

He is condemned by his own confession.

ELIZABETH.      (*To Leicester.*)

Begone.

(*To Burleigh.*)

Conduct the traitor to the Tower.

LEICESTER.

That I am not : I've done amiss in that  
To you I made a mystery of this step ;  
Yet was the motive loyal ; it was done  
To foil the enemy, and to entrap her.

ELIZABETH.

Unworthy pretext !

BURLEIGH.

How my Lord you thought?



LEICESTER.

I have, I must acknowledge, ventur'd largely,  
And no one, but the Earl of Leicester, durst  
Risk such transactions in the British Court.  
All are aware how much I hate the Stuart;  
The office I'm invested with—the trust  
With which I'm honor'd by the Queen must quell  
All doubt of my true faith, and loyalty:  
The man who stands pre-eminent in favor  
May take some bolder flight—some higher pitch  
To shew his duty, and devotion.

BURLEIGH.

Why,

When deeds are good, should they be done in silence?

LEICESTER.

You use, my Lord, to let your tongue proclaim,  
And be the trumpet of your deeds, ere done:  
That is your way, my Lord; but it is mine  
To give my acts precedence of my speech.

BURLEIGH.

You now use speech, as being enforc'd thereto.

LEICESTER.

And you can claim the power of working wonders!  
Of having sav'd your Queen—unmask'd the traitors;  
You think that all is known to you—that nothing

Can 'scape your eagle eye—alas ! poor boaster ;  
Had I not stood i'the gap this very day  
Mary was free, maugre your vigilance !

BURLEIGH.

You have ?—

LEICESTER.

Yes, I myself, my Lord. The mean  
Through which I carried on the plot with Mary  
Was the young Mortimer, Sir Amyas's nephew ;  
And through this channel came to me the knowledge  
That this same Mortimer did circumvent you.  
That he, a furious Papist, and the tool  
Of the Lorrainers, was the Stuart's creature—  
That he had join'd with fierce conspirators,  
Mary to free, and slay Elizabeth.  
That she should owe her freedom to their force.  
Few moments since the plot was all expos'd  
By his own mouth, upon the which I gave him  
Up to the guard, and in his desperation  
To see his work o'erturn'd, the mask torn off,  
He slew himself.

BURLEIGH.

And did it happen now,  
Now since I left you ?

LEICESTER.

I have cause to grieve  
For my own sake that thus he perished ;  
Had he but liv'd his evidence had shown  
How clear I stand ; how pure from such a stain.  
Therefore I gave him to the Judge's hand,  
The strictest trial would confirm my truth  
And set the seal upon my innocence.

BURLEIGH.

He kill'd himself say you, or did he owe  
His death to you ?

LEICESTER.

What base suspicion ! Hear  
What the guard says, to whom I gave him up—  
(*Calling the Guard and speaking to them.*)  
Make your report to the Queen's Majesty.

OFFICER.

I was on duty in the Anti-Chamber,  
When suddenly my Lord the door flung open,  
And bade me take in custody the Knight,  
And guard him as a traitor. Thereupon,  
As if in fury did he draw a dagger,  
And utt'ring imprecations 'gainst the Queen,  
Ere we could hinder struck it to his heart ;  
And so fell dead.

LEICESTER.

'Tis well, Sir, now retire,  
The Queen is now inform'd of the event.

*(Exit Officer.)*

ELIZABETH.

What an abyss of horrors !

LEICESTER.

Who is't then  
That has preserv'd you ? Is it the Lord Burleigh ?  
Knew he the dangers that surrounded you—  
Did he avert them ? 'Twas your faithful Leicester.

BURLEIGH to LEICESTER.

This Mortimer tim'd well his death for you.

ELIZABETH.

I know not what to say—I do believe you,  
And I believe you not—I think you guilty,  
And think you not so. Oh ! detested she,  
Who hath prepar'd this cup of bitterness !

LEICESTER.

She must die—

My voice is now with those who doom her death :  
My counsel was to stay the execution  
Till some new arm was rais'd in her defence,  
This now has happen'd, and my vote is therefore  
That no delay should longer interpose.

BURLEIGH.

Is this your counsel—your's ?

LEICESTER.

Yes, hard as 'tis

To use extreamest rigour, now 'tis plain  
The safety of our Queen demands this victim.  
I therefore counsel that the order for  
Her execution be forthwith prepar'd.

BURLEIGH.

Since then my Lord so true and earnest means it,

*(To the Queen.)*

I will propose that the accomplishment  
Of what is doom'd shall be his special care.

LEICESTER.

Mine ?

BURLEIGH.

Yours. You cannot better hush suspicion,  
Which now weighs on you, than by seeing her  
Whom you are said to love, (which is your crime,)  
Led to the scaffold, there to lose her head.

ELIZABETH.

*(Looking earnestly at Leicester.)*

Burleigh says well—'tis order'd—and so be it.

LEICESTER.

Though I am justly exempt from a duty,

Whose gloomy office misbeseems my rank,  
And which in every sense were better fitting  
For such as Burleigh, than a man like me,  
Who stands so near the person of his Queen,  
And should be distant from ought sinister ;  
Yet, still to give a sample of my zeal,  
And to my Queen my most obsequious homage,  
I wave all privilege of dignity,  
And will fulfil the duty that's decreed me.

ELIZABETH.

Lord Burleigh shares it with you—give your orders  
(*To Burleigh.*)

And let the warrant be forthwith prepar'd—  
(*Exit Burleigh.*)  
(*A tumult is heard without.*)

*Manet*—ELIZABETH. *Enter*—KENT.

ELIZABETH.

What's happen'd my Lord Kent—what means this  
uproar ?

Is the whole city rous'd—say what imports it ?

KENT.

Queen, 'tis the pop'lace that surrounds the palace,  
And loud and urgently demands to see you.

ELIZABETH.

What would my people ?

KENT.

London's citizens  
Have heard with terror that your life is threat'ned ;  
That murderers are abroad, sent by the Pope,  
And that the Catholics have all conspir'd  
Mary to free, and set her on the throne.  
The pop'lace is quite furious—nor will rest  
Unless the Stuart's head shall fall to-day.

ELIZABETH.

How will they dare compel me ?

KENT,

They've determin'd  
Not to go home till you've confirm'd the sentence.

*Enter—BURLEIGH and DAVISON with a Paper.*

*(Exit Kent.)*

ELIZABETH.

What bring you, Davison ?

DAVISON.

'Tis your command,  
O Queen !

ELIZABETH.

*(Taking the paper she shudders and retires.)*

What is't?—O God !

BURLEIGH.

Incline to hear  
The people's voice ; it is the voice of God !

*Enter*—SHREWSBURY.

This course is headlong, Queen, be firm and steadfast.

(*Seeing Davison with the paper.*)

Or is it finish'd—is it so indeed?

I see a hapless paper in his hand—

Let it not be presented to my Queen.

ELIZABETH.

O noble Shrewsbury I am compell'd!

SHREWSBURY.

Who can compel you? You are paramount.

And here's the place to shew you bear the sway.

Impose a silence on those noisy tongues,

Which dare to circumscribe your royal pleasure.

The people are in dread, and blind delusion;

And you, so mov'd to vengeance, scarce yourself.

You're now too much a mortal to judge well.

BURLEIGH.

The judgment's past. It is not question now

Of sentence, but the time of execution.

KENT—*Re-enters.*

The tumult gathers strength—we scarce can curb

The people's rage.

ELIZABETH to SHREWSBURY.

You see how I am forc'd—





## SHREWSBURY.

I ask but for delay. Your pen may now  
By a slight stroke for ever mar your peace.  
The need, if such there be, has nothing new :  
And shall a moment thus surprize you ? Grant  
A short delay. Collect your scatter'd spirits.  
Await an hour that brings you less disquiet.

BURLEIGH. (*With warmth.*)

Doubt, hesitate, delay—till the whole realm  
Burst out in flame—and till your enemy  
Shall guide the dagger to its destin'd mark !  
Thrice hath kind Providence averted it ;  
To-day it touch'd you nearly. You tempt God  
In hoping still a miracle may save you !

## SHREWSBURY.

The wond'rous hand of God which four times thus  
Hath shielded you, and given the feeble arm  
Of one so old the power to over-match  
The furious Monk, must claim our inmost trust.  
I will not now attempt to plead for justice,  
Now's not the time ; in this turmoil and strife  
Its soft and modest voice cannot be heard :—  
Yet, take this warning ; does the living Mary  
Inspire alarm and terror ? 'tis not now  
She should affright you ; fear her when she's dead ;  
When she has perish'd on the scaffold ! then

Will she come forth a demon of revenge,  
Like some Erinnyes, stalking through the land,  
And turn your people's hearts from their allegiance.  
When it is done, go forth into the streets  
Of London, and parade ye 'fore your people.  
Those who were wont with joy to throng around you  
Will shew that England is not what it was ;  
For now, no longer cloth'd i'the majesty  
Of justice, will you draw all hearts towards you.  
Fear, the dread satellite of tyranny,  
Will with contagious trembling lead the van,  
And make a desert wheresoe'er you come.  
You will have reach'd the last extremity ;  
For what head's safe if one so sacred fall !

ELIZABETH.

Oh ! Shrewsbury, you have to-day preserv'd  
My life—have turn'd aside the murderous dagger.  
O why not rather leave it to its aim  
So might these combats end—no longer doubting—  
Free from all blame I'd rested in my grave.\*

\* The pruning knife has been applied to this speech of Elizabeth's, the part cut off being chiefly a repetition of sentiments before expressed. Burleigh's reply is omitted for the same reason, and to avoid the "longeurs" alluded to in the preface. It may be remarked, as a further reason, that the same interlocutors have had an argument together upon the same subject in the Second Act.

Let me be left alone. With mortals is  
Counsel nor comfort in these weighty things ;  
I will submit them to a higher judge—  
What he enjoins me, that will I perform.  
Retire my Lords.

(*To Davison.*)

Be in attendance, Sir.

(*Exeunt Lords.*)

*Manent*—ELIZABETH—(*Sola.*)

O servitude to be my subjects' slave !  
Disgraceful bondage—how my soul is weary  
Of off'ring incense to a thing it loathes !  
When shall I hold the sceptre firmly—freely—  
Nor crouch beneath this yoke. He's not a King  
Whom thus capricious mobs may dare controul,  
But he, who dares capricious mobs condemn.  
Why did I hold the scales of justice even,  
And ever hate an arbitrary sway,  
If this must tie my hands, in greatest need,  
'Gainst a decisive, first essay of rigour !  
My own comparison condemns myself !  
If, like the Spanish Mary, my precursor,  
I'd been tyrannical, the spilling blood  
Had been an action scarcely worth a note.  
But was the love of justice my free choice ?

The stern necessity that bows the will  
E'en of the despot doth impose this virtue.  
On all sides bay'd by enemies, my throne  
Is but upholden by the people's love.  
The Potentates of Europe knit their strength  
To whelm me in the dust. Against my head  
The Roman Prelate hurls his furious thunder :  
False France betrays me with a brother's kiss ;  
While Spain pours all her navies on the ocean,  
In open, bitter war, and threaten'd ruin.  
Thus, I, a woman, battle with a world !  
Then must I with the garb of virtue deck  
Whate'er deforms my title, or my birth,  
Since e'en my royal father has denounc'd it.  
But vainly strive I—still opposing hate,  
Tears off the veil, and points me out this Stuart,  
A baleful ghost, that ever blights my bliss.  
Then must I end these fears—her head must fall  
And peace will follow, and the discord cease.  
Where'er a joy, or hope did seem to blossom,  
There have I found this serpent in my path.  
First snatch'd she from me a fond lover's heart,  
And next a bridegroom—all unhappiness  
That casts me down is center'd in this Stuart !  
Were she no longer number'd with the living,

I were as free, as is the mountain air !

*(After a pause.)*

How scornfully fierce she scowl'd upon me,

As if the light'ning of her look should blast me !

Weak enemy ! my hands bear keener darts ;

Their blows are deadly, and thou art no more.

*(Going hastily to the table and snatching up the pen.)*

Am I a bastard ?—wretch ! I am but so

So long as thou hast being—thou extinct,

All doubt will vanish of my royal birth.

When England's people have not where to choose,

I am legitimately born in wedlock !

*(She signs the warrant with a quick and firm stroke of the pen, then lets it fall, and retires back with a look of horror—soon after rings the bell.)*

*Enter—*DAVISON.

ELIZABETH.

Where are the Lords ?

DAVISON.

They are now endeavouring  
Peace to restore among the rioters.

Soon as the Earl of Shrewsbury show'd himself,

The uproar in an instant was quite still.

That is the man, (an hundred voices shouted,)

The man, (hear him) who has preserv'd our Queen :

The bravest man in England. Then began  
The noble Talbot; and in accents mild  
Rebuk'd the people for their violence.  
So energetic, and convincing was  
His speech, that suddenly the mob was quiet,  
And slunk away.

ELIZABETH.

How changeable's the many,  
Shifting with every breeze! alas for them  
Who lean upon such reeds! Sir, 'tis enough:  
You may retire. As for this paper, take it,  
I leave it in your hands.

*(To Davison as he is going out.)*

DAVISON.

*(Looking at the paper, appears alarmed.)*

Your name is to it, Queen,  
You have decided then?

ELIZABETH.

I was to sign it—  
This I have done—naught is decided by  
A scrap of paper—names put not to death.

DAVISON.

Your name, O Queen, thus set unto this paper,  
Determines all—is death, which strikes its object,  
Wing'd as the thunderbolt. In this warrant

Orders are giv'n to the Commissioners,  
And Sheriff, in all haste to Fotheringay  
That they repair, and to the Queen of Scotland  
Announce her death ; and at the dawn next day,  
Carry the sentence into execution :—  
When I shall give this paper from my hands  
There's no demur. She's ta'en her leave of life.

ELIZABETH.

Yes, Sir, God's plac'd a business of importance  
In your poor hands—implore a benediction  
That you may be enlighten'd by his wisdom—  
I go, and leave you to your duty's office.

*(Elizabeth is going.)*

DAVISON—*(Stepping before her.)*

Not so, O Queen : Oh ! do not leave me thus,  
'Ere you have fully made your pleasure known.  
How need I other wisdom for my guide  
Than this, to follow your commands to th' letter ?  
You place the paper in my hands, that I  
Should see its purpose presently obey'd ?

ELIZABETH.

Consider this according to your judgment !

DAVISON.

Mine ? oh ! not mine—forbid it Heaven ! Obedience  
Is my whole knowledge—there should naught remain

For me, who serve you, to decide upon.

A trifling error makes it regicide,

A mischief which is measureless and monstrous !

Vouchsafe, that I, in such a serious matter,

Be a blind instrument without a will.

What use is to be made of this death warrant ?

ELIZABETH.

Its name explains it.

DAVISON.

'Tis for execution ?

ELIZABETH.

I say not so—and tremble but to think it !

DAVISON.

Your will is that I keep it longer by me ?

ELIZABETH.

*(Sharply.)*

That's at your peril—you must answer it.

DAVISON.

I ! Holy Heaven ! Say, Queen, what's your will ?

ELIZABETH.

My will is that this most unhappy business

Be no more mentioned—that my repose

Both now, and for the future, be not troubled.

DAVISON.

'Tis but a word—Oh ! say explicitly,

What with this writing you would have me do ?



ELIZABETH.

I have declar'd it, trouble me no more.

DAVISON.

You have said nothing—nothing have you told me—  
Oh ! may it please your gracious Majesty  
To call to mind—

ELIZABETH.

This is insufferable !

DAVISON.

Have patience with me. I'm but newly come  
Into this office, and as yet I know not  
The language of the Court, and of its Kings.  
In plain and simple manners was I rear'd,  
Therefore have patience with me, and vouchsafe  
T' instruct me clearly where my duty lies.  
Receive this paper back—Oh ! take it, take it—  
'Twill be like coals of fire within my hands.  
Select not me to render you my service  
In this dread bus'ness !

ELIZABETH.

Do what is your duty.

(*Exit.*)

*Manet*—DAVISON.

She's gone, and left me with this fearful scroll,  
Without direction, and in doubt. What shall I ?

Shall I retain it—shall I give it up ?

*(To Burleigh who enters.)*

'Tis well, my Lord, you're come—'twas you who  
brought me

Into this office—liberate me from it.

I undertook it, witting not its weight.

Let me return to the obscurity

Where first you found me. My place is not here.

BURLEIGH.

What is the matter, Sir, collect yourself.

Where is the warrant—you have seen the Queen ?

DAVISON.

She hath just left me—in an angry mood—

Advise me, help me, snatch me from this Hell

Of doubt and anguish ! Here's the warrant—sign'd—

BURLEIGH.

Is it ? Give, give it here.

*(Eagerly.)*

DAVISON.

I dare not.

BURLEIGH.

What ?

DAVISON.

She hath not clearly giv'n me her commands !

BURLEIGH.

Not clearly—hath she not subscrib'd it? Give it.

DAVISON.

It must be acted on, and it must not  
Be acted on ; I know not what to do.

BURLEIGH.

It must be acted on without delay—  
Then give it. You're undone, if you are slow.

DAVISON.

I am undone—if I proceed too fast !

BURLEIGH.

You are a fool—you've lost your senses—give it.

*(Burleigh snatches the paper and exit.)*

DAVISON.

What are you doing—stay, 'twill be my ruin.

*(Follows Burleigh.)*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

## ACT V.

SCENE—SAME CHAMBER IN FOTHERINGAY CASTLE  
AS IN ACT. I.

HANNAH KENNEDY *appears in deep mourning and in great grief—is employed in sealing letters &c. PAULET and DRURY likewise in mourning enter, several Servants follow them bearing gold and silver vases, mirrors, and other costly articles. PAULET gives the jewel case to KENNEDY, and an inventory (as it appears), then enter MELVIL, to whom she exclaims upon seeing him—*

Melvil is't you ? See I you once again ?

MELVIL.

Yes, faithful Kennedy, we meet once more.

KENNEDY.

After a long, long painful separation !

MELVIL.

A meeting fraught with misery and distraction !

KENNEDY.

O God you come !

MELVIL.

To take a last farewell,  
And an eternal one of my dear Sovereign !

KENNEDY.

At length, upon the morning of her death  
Your presence, so long look'd for, so desir'd,  
Is granted her—I will not now, dear Sir,  
Interrogate what lot hath fall'n to you,  
Nor make recital of our various suff'rings,  
Since you enforc'd departure from our side.  
Alas ! a time for that will not be wanting !  
O Melvil, Melvil—and are we reserv'd  
To see the dawning of a day like this ?

MELVIL.

Let us not move each other. My life long  
My tears will flow—naught that betokeneth joy  
Will e'er again irradiate my features—  
My sorrow is for aye—to-day alone  
Will I be firm. Give me too your promise  
To moderate your grief; and when all others  
Sink in despair, let us with manly courage  
Point her the way, and in the path of death  
Be the firm staff, that shall sustain her steps !

KENNEDY.

Melvil, you err in thinking that the Queen

Needs our support to meet her end with firmness.

'Tis rather she who gives us the example  
Of bold endurance. Fear not—Mary Stuart  
Will as a Queen, and as a heroine die.

MELVIL.

Did she receive th' announcement of her fate  
Firmly ? 'tis said she was not well prepar'd ?

KENNEDY.

That she was not—but it was other fears  
Unnerv'd my Lady : that which made her tremble  
Was not her death, but her deliverer.

Freedom was promis'd us. This very night  
Had Mortimer engag'd to bear us hence :  
And vibrating betwixt her hopes and fears,  
Whether her honor, and her royal person  
Might be entrusted to this daring youth—  
The Queen was waiting for the break of day.  
Sudden a noise i'the Castle smote our ears—  
The strokes of hammers echo'd all around—  
This to our thoughts appear'd a liberation ;  
Hope was re-kindled, and the wish for life  
Awoke all powerful, and spontaneous.  
The door is open'd—'tis—Sir Amyas Paulet—  
Who brings us notice, that the artisans  
Prepare the scaffold in a lower chamber !

MELVIL.

O gracious Heaven! but tell me, how the Queen  
Bore this dismaying, and remorseless turn.

KENNEDY.

We do not step by step depart from life,  
But all at once. Quick, sudden, in a moment  
Th' exchange must be from mortal to eternal.  
And God hath graciously vouchsaf'd my Lady  
Should banish earthly cares in this sad moment,  
And with a steadfast soul, and fill'd with hope  
Lay hold upon th' unfading joys of Heav'n!  
No sign of blanching fear, no word of plaint  
Disgrac'd the Queen! 'twas only, when she heard  
How basely the Lord Leicester had betray'd her,  
And learnt the story of the spirited youth  
Whose zeal for her had caus'd him fall the victim:—  
Saw the deep grief of the old Knight, whose hope,  
Whose only heir had perish'd in her cause—  
Then flow'd her tears, which not her own misfortunes,  
But others' griefs wrung from her streaming eyes.

MELVIL.

Where is she now—can you not bring me to her?

KENNEDY.

The rest o'the night she has employ'd in prayer;  
In writing her last farewell to her friends,

And her last testament with her own hands.  
The slumber she's now taking is the last  
That shall refresh her.

MELVIL.

Who is with her now?

*Enter* —MARGARET CURLE.

KENNEDY.

What is your errand—is my Lady stirring?

CURLE.

Already dress'd—she hath enquir'd for you.

KENNEDY.

I come. O do not follow me, until

*(To Melvil who is following her.)*

I have prepared my Lady to receive you.

*Exit Kennedy.*

CURLE.

Melvil, our Major d'Domo!

MELVIL.

Yes, the same.

CURLE.

This house hath now no longer need of you:—  
Melvil you come from London, can you tell me  
News of my husband?

MELVIL.

There is a report  
That he from prison will be loos'd, so soon—



CURLE.

So soon as our dear mistress is no more !  
What an abandoned, and shameless traitor !  
He is the murderer of our dearest Lady.  
They say his testimony 'twas condemn'd her !

MELVIL.

'Twas so, indeed.

CURLE.

May his pernicious soul  
Perish eternally—he falsely swore.

MELVIL.

Consider Madam !

CURLE.

Nay, I'll swear 'tis so—  
I will protest it to his very beard—  
I'll fill the whole world with the declaration  
That she dies innocent.

MELVIL.

God grant it be so !

*Enter—BURGOYNE afterwards KENNEDY.*

BURGOYNE.

Melvil !

MELVIL.

Burgoyne ?                    (*They embrace.*)

BURGOYNE.

*(Addressing Curle.)*

Go bring a glass of wine

Quick to our Lady.

MELVIL.

Is the Queen unwell ?

BURGOYNE.

Her heroism deceives her. She feels strong,

And thinks, she needs not bodily support ;

But there's prepar'd for her a bitter conflict.

We would not that her enemies should boast

That fears of death have made her cheek so pale,

When nature 'tis that sinks through feebleness !

MELVIL.

*(To Kennedy who enters.)*

Will she receive me ?

KENNEDY.

She is coming hither.

You seem to look about you with surprize,

And by your looks to question me the meaning

Of all this state in the abode of death.

Oh ! Sir, we suffer'd want the while we liv'd,

And now in death we're delicate again.\*

\* A line or two is here omitted savouring of repetition.

*Enter—MARGARET CURLE—She brings a gilt cup with wine which she places on the table and supports herself on a chair looking pale and trembling.*

MELVIL.

What has alarm'd you—Madam what's the matter?

CURLE.

O God!

BURGOYNE.

What ails you?

CURLE.

What a sight to see!

MELVIL.

Compose yourself, and tell what you have seen.

CURLE.

As I ascended with the cup of wine—

The door was open—and I saw—Oh God!

What did I see!—

MELVIL.

What saw you? be collected.

CURLE.

The dismal walls were all hung round with black—

A bulky platform too, with black o'erspread,

Was rear'd—i'the middle stood a sable block—

A cushion—and on one side was an axe,

Shining and sharp. The Hall was full of men

Who throng'd around the platform—all their looks  
Bespoke them bloody—eager for their victim.

MELVIL.

Oh God assist our Lady!

KENNEDY.

Hush, she comes.

*Enter—MARY.*

*She is dressed in white in her best attire, around her neck hangs a chain. An Agnus Dei and a Rosary are suspended to her girdle. She has a crucifix in her hand and a diadem on her head—her large black veil is thrown back—at her entrance the persons present retire on each side and express great grief. MELVIL involuntarily falls on one knee. MARY looks around her with a noble dignity.*

MARY.

Why do you mourn, and weep? You rather should  
Rejoice with me, that I am fast approaching  
The term of all my woes.—My bonds fall off—  
My prison opens—and my soul soars gladly  
Aloft on angel wings to endless freedom.  
When first I fell into this cruel thrall  
Of my proud foe, (unworthy treatment for  
A Queen both great and free) 'twas then the time  
For lamentation—now the death so near

Comes, like a friend, beneficent, and healing,  
Shrouding my insults with his dusky pinions !  
When lowly sunk in sad adversity,  
The closing scene ennobles us again.  
I feel the crown again upon my head,  
And a becoming pride within my heart.

*(Seeing Melvil who is kneeling.)*

How, Melvil ! Not so worthy Sir, arise, *(He rises.)*  
You're present here, not to behold my death,  
But to be witness of my deathless triumph !  
I never thought t' attain so high a fortune,  
As that my enemies should not have pow'r  
To blight my future glory—that a friend,  
And a believer of our holy faith,  
Should testify how pass'd my final hour.  
Say, worthy Melvil, how has't far'd with you  
In this unfriendly, and unsocial land ?  
Since violence remov'd you from my side,  
Solicitude for you hath pain'd me often.

MELVIL.

I've felt no want, but this—nor other grief,  
But th' having no ability to serve you.

MARY.

My ancient valet, Didier, how does he ?  
But he was stricken in years—and, faithful man,

He will ere this have gone to his long rest.

MELVIL.

God hath not granted him this boon. He lives,  
And sees your youth precede him to the tomb !

MARY.

Could I but have the happiness in dying  
To hold in my embrace my dearest kinsfolk—  
But I must life relinquish amid strangers.  
Yours are the only tears that I shall see.  
Melvil to your true bosom I confide  
My latest benedictions on my friends.\*  
They all have place in my last testament.  
They will not my poor tokens of regard,  
Because they're lowly, think less estimable !

*(To the Servants.)*

I have commended you to my good brother,  
The King of France ; he will have care of you,  
And make his country yours. O do not tarry,  
( 'Tis my last prayer unto you ) here in England.  
Let not the English glut their pride of heart  
With your misfortunes ; nor behold i' the dust  
Those who had once protection in my service.  
Promise upon this crucifix to quit

\* These friends are here particularized in a few lines, which add no interest to the scene, and are therefore omitted.

This hapless land, as soon as I am gone. .

MELVIL.

I swear to do this—in the name of all.

MARY.

The little wealth that rapine has resign'd me,  
It is allowed me freely to dispose of :  
This I have shar'd among you. My last will,  
I trust, will be respected. What I wear  
In my last journey also is your own.

*(To her waiting woman.)*

Permit me once again to bear about me  
The earthly pageant, in my way to Heaven.  
To you my Alice, Gertrude, Rosamond,  
I do bequeath my pearls, and my apparel.  
Your youth may fitly prize such ornaments.

*(To Curle.)*

You, Margaret, have the greatest claim to know  
I can be gen'rous, for of all the rest  
'Tis you I leave the wretchedest behind me ;  
On you I visit not your husband's fault,  
And this my legacy to you will prove.

*(To Kennedy.)*

You, my dear faithful Hannah, prize not gold  
Nor costly jewels. The remembrance of me  
Will be the greatest treasure in your store.

Take then this handkerchief—with my own hands  
I wrought it for you in my hours of sadness,  
And scalding tears are interwoven in it.  
With the same handkerchief you'll bind my eyes  
(If so be needed.) This extremest service  
It is my wish my Hannah should perform.

KENNEDY.

Melvil I cannot bear it—

MARY.

Come ye all,

Come, and receive my last embrace and farewell.  
Adieu, my Margaret, Alice fare you well—  
Thanks Burgoyne for your faithful services.  
Gertrude, your lips are burning. I have been  
Detested much—but still as much belov'd.\*  
But now 'tis time to part—now all is done—  
Farewell—farewell—a long farewell to all.

*(Mary turns from the attendants, who retire.)*

MARY and MELVIL—*Manent.*

MARY.

Thus I dispose then of all temporal matters,  
And trust in my departure from this world.  
I owe man naught. There now remains but this

\* The detail is here somewhat compressed, being rather too peculiar to the German taste.



Which my beleagur'd soul hems in, and straitens  
In its free flight to happiness on high.

MELVIL.

Oh! let me hear it. Ease your troubled bosom,  
And let a true friend share in your affliction!

MARY.

I'm on the verge of an eternity,  
And soon must stand before a righteous Judge;  
And yet have I no sacred rites perform'd.  
A priest of my persuasion is deny'd me;  
And hands unhallow'd can afford no aid.  
Our Church's faith will I preserve in death.\*

MELVIL.

Calm then your heart—the earnest pious wish  
Stands for performance in the eye of Heav'n.  
The tyrants' might can fetter but the hands:  
Our aspirations can ascend to God!

MARY.

I am alone shut out. Alas! this blessing  
Cannot pierce through my dungeon, and approach me.

MELVIL.

Yes—it can pierce—is near thee—place thy trust

\* Mary's detail of the Catholic mode of worship, here omitted, would excite controversial feelings and of course be detrimental to the pathos. No experienced critic would recommend the insertion of it.

In the Almighty ; for the barren trunk  
Can throw out branches in the hand of faith :  
He who pour'd out a fountain from the rock,  
Can raise an altar in thy prison house—  
Can change this quickly from an earthly draught  
Into a cup of nourishment divine.

*(Takes up a goblet.)*

MARY.

Do I conceive you Melvil—yes, I do :  
Here is no priest, no church, no sacrament ;  
Yet, you, not consecrated, are the priest—  
The messenger of God, who brings me peace.  
To you will I now make my last confession,  
And from your mouth receive my absolution.

MELVIL.

If then your heart so yearns to this confession,  
Learn, O my Queen, that for your consolation  
God readily can work a miracle !

*(Uncovers his head and shews the clerical tonsure.)*

I am a priest to hear your last avowal,  
To preach peace to you on your way to death ;  
I've ta'en upon me the seven sacraments,  
And have convey'd unto this place the host  
The Holy Father's self has consecrated.

*(Shews the consecrated wafer.)*

MARY.

Thus on the very threshold of the grave,  
An Heavenly favor is vouchsaf'd unto me.  
Thus when each earthly liberator fails me,  
One sent from Heaven supplies an aid unlook'd for.

MELVIL.

Say of what sins your conscience is afraid.

MARY.

The sins and follies of my youth I have  
Repented of in solitude and sorrow ;  
My loves, my hates are cast into oblivion,  
So may the grace eternal make me conquer  
In my last flight as I hide nought I wot of.

MELVIL.

How ? wilt thou hide from God the deep offence,  
For which men doom thee to a public scaffold ?  
Thou tell'st me nothing of thy bloody part  
In Babington's, and Parry's traitorous acts ?  
You die a mortal death for their misdoings,  
And will you for them die the death eternal ?

MARY.

I've supplicated every Potentate  
To free me from my most unworthy bondage ;  
Yet have I neither through design nor deed,  
Attempted ought against my enemy's life.

MELVIL.

Then have your secretaries borne false witness?

MARY.

What I've declar'd is true—what they have witness'd,  
That let God judge!

MELVIL.

Receive then the &c.\*

MELVIL.

Prepare now to receive the Lords of Leicester  
And Burleigh—they're already in attendance.

*Enter—BURLEIGH and LEICESTER. The latter remains behind, Burleigh comes forward.*

BURLEIGH.

I come my Lady Stuart to receive  
Your last commands.

MARY.

I give you thanks, my Lord.

BURLEIGH.

The orders of the Queen, my Sov'reign, are  
That nothing reasonable should be refus'd you.

\* In this place (in the original) the Sacrament (the Eucharist) is administered in both kinds (the wafer and the cup) the latter being as Melvil says a special favor granted by the Pope. This solemnity is evidently not fitted for the stage, but it might take place apart. In the confession the mention of Darnley's death is avoided for the reason before given, and there is another omission of a few lines to obviate sameness.

MARY.

My testament declares my last requests.  
I've plac'd it in Sir Amyas Paulet's hands,  
And trust what it contains will be fulfill'd.

PAULET.

Depend on that.

MARY.

I beg my servants may  
Have free permission to depart for France,  
Or Scotland, as may suit the wish of each.

BURLEIGH.

It shall be as you wish.

MARY.

And as my body  
Is not to be interr'd in holy ground,  
Indulge me that this truest of domestics  
*(Pointing to Melvil.)*  
Carry my heart to France—unto my friends—  
Ah! it was ever there!

BURLEIGH.

It shall be order'd.  
Is there yet ought?

MARY.

Convey my kindly greeting  
Unto the Queen of England. Tell her that

With my whole heart I pardon her my death,  
And all remorseful do reproach myself  
The slights of yesterday. May God uphold her,  
And crown her domination with success !

BURLEIGH.

Say, have you not yet turn'd to better counsel,  
And still refuse th' assistance of the chaplain ?

MARY.

I've made my peace with God. Sir Amyas Paulet,  
I've innocently caus'd you many troubles—  
Broken your staff of age. Oh ! let me hope,  
Your hatred will not follow my rememb'rance !

PAULET.

May God be with you—go from hence in peace !  
*(Kennedy with other attendants of Mary burst in  
with marks of terror.) The Sheriff with his white  
staff of office, and other armed men are seen through  
the doors which are left open.*

MARY.

What is it Hannah ? 'Tis, indeed, the time  
The Sheriff comes to lead us to our death.

*(To her women.)*

We must—we now must part—farewell, farewell !

*(To Melvil.)*

You, worthy Sir, and my own faithful Hannah,

Shall trace with me the last steps of my journey.  
Do not, my Lord, deny me thus much favor.

BURLEIGH.

For this I've no authority.

MARY.

How ! my Lord,  
Can you refuse so trifling a request—  
Consider but my sex ? Who is't that shall  
Perform the last sad office ? It can never  
Be the intention of the Queen, my Sister,  
The sex should be dishonor'd in my person,  
And the rude hands of barb'rous men disrobe me !

BURLEIGH.

'Tis not allow'd that women should ascend  
The scaffold steps—their loud laments, and shrieks—

MARY.

She will not shriek—I deeply pledge myself  
For the firm constancy of Hannah's soul.  
Be gracious, Lord, do not divide me dying  
From one who's been my constant guide, and nurse.  
She bore me in her arms on this world's threshold,  
And her kind hand shall stay my parting steps !

PAULET to BURLEIGH.

Let it be so.

BURLEIGH.

So be it.

MARY.

Now, there's nothing  
More for this world. My Saviour, my Redeemer !

*(Kissing the Crucifix.)*

Like as thy arms were stretch'd upon the Cross,  
So spread them now, and take me to thyself !

*(To Leicester who comes forward.)*

You keep your promise with me, my Lord Leicester,  
Your arm should be my conduct from my pris'n,  
And now you offer it for my support.

Yes, Leicester, 'twas from this your proffer'd hand  
I hop'd my freedom—(freedom doubly dear  
Giv'n by your hand, and cherish'd by your love,)  
To tread anew the paths of life with joy.

Now then, whilst on the way with life to part,  
And wander hence a solitary ghost,

Whom things of earth have no more power to move,

Now, Leicester, 'tis, that I without a blush

May own the weakness that I've overcome.

Farewell ! and if it may be so, live happy :

'Twas yours to be the suitor of two Queens ;

A tender loving heart have you despis'd—

Betray'd—for one supreme in haughtiness :



Kneel at the feet of your Elizabeth,  
May your reward not prove your punishment.  
Farewell. Here ends the scene of all that's earthly.

(*Exeunt Mary, Lords, &c.*)

LEICESTER—*Manet. Solus.*

And live I yet ! Yet bear of life the burthen !  
Falls not the ponderous roof upon my head—  
Opens no chasm, to receive within  
The veriest wretch that breathes ? Oh ! what have I  
Foregone ? what pearl of price have thrown away ?  
Against what heavenly blessing shut my heart ?  
She takes her flight, like an ethereal spirit,  
And leaves me the despair of damned souls !  
Where is the resolution I brought hither,  
Coldly to stifle what the heart might whisper,  
And see her falling head with tearless eyes !  
Awakes her aspect my forgotten shame,  
And are her victim cords my bands of love !  
Wretch that thou art ! it chimes no more with thee  
To melt, like woman, with a soft-eyed pity.  
Steel'd be thy breast with panoply of proof,  
And be a front of adamant thy vizor !  
Would'st thou retain the meed of villainy,  
Boldly must thou sustain it to the end.

Hush, my compassion, turn, O eyes, to rock !

I will be witness of the fatal stroke.

*(He goes with a firm step towards the door through which Mary passed, but remains standing midway.)*

In vain, in vain ! Hell pours her wild affright

Within my breast, and scares me from the sight !

—I cannot see her die. Hark ! what was that ?

*(Listening.)*

Already they're beneath—beneath my feet

The dreadful business is in consummation—

I hear them speaking. Hence, away, away,

From this abode of death, and of dismay !

*(He tries to escape through another door, but finds it locked.)*

How doth some demon chain me to the ground—

Must I give ear to what I dare not look on ?

The chaplain speaks—he is exhorting her—

She interrupts him. Hark ! she prays aloud

With a firm voice. Now all is still—quite still.

I hear a sobbing, and the cries of women.

Now she unrobes—hark—now they set the stool,

She kneels upon the cushion—lays her head—

*(Having spoken the last words with still increasing perturbation, and paused awhile, he appears to be seized with a sudden tremor, shrinks back, and*

*falls in a swoon—at the same time a low murmuring is heard, which continues till the scene closes.\**

THE QUEEN'S CHAMBER—SAME AS IN FOURTH ACT.

ELIZABETH.

*(Enters from a side door, her step and her looks shew great emotion.)*

Still no one here, and no intelligence !  
Will night fall ne'er arrive—stands the sun still  
In his career through Heav'n ! Must I still ling'ring  
Upon the rack of expectation lie !  
Is't done, or not done ? each alternative  
Inspires alarm ! I am afraid to ask.  
Lord Leicester comes not—Burleigh is not here—  
Who, I appointed, should see done the sentence.  
Have they from London journey'd ? then 'tis done.  
The arrow hath been drawn to th' head—it flies—  
It strikes—hath stricken. Were my crown at stake  
I can forbear no longer. Who is there ?

*(Enter Page.)*

Come you then back alone. Where are the Lords ?

\* M. P. Lebrun has closed his drama with this scene, and perhaps not injudiciously ; but Elizabeth, avoided by Shrewsbury, (whose parting words are most galling,) and abandoned by her favourite, Leicester, presents an attitude which is effective in itself, and which poetical justice seems to require.

PAGE.

The Earl of Leicester and the Lord Treasurer?

ELIZABETH.

Where are they?

PAGE.

They are not now in London.

ELIZABETH.

No—where are they then?

PAGE.

No one can inform me.

Before the break of day, in haste and secret,

Did both Lords leave.

ELIZABETH.

I am then Queen of England!

Go call—no stay. She must be now no more!

At length I've room enough upon this earth

*(To the Page.)*

Still there? My secretary Davison

Must come to me forthwith. And likewise send

A message to Earl Shrewsbury—he's here

Already.

*Enter—SHREWSBURY.*

*(Exit Page.)*

ELIZABETH.

Worthy Lord, you are most welcome.

Something of moment it must be that brings you  
At this late hour ?

SHREWSBURY.

Illustrious Princess,

My heart, solicitous for your renown,  
Prompted a painful visit to the tower ;  
Where Mary's secretaries, Curle and Nau,  
Are prisoners kept, that I might once again,  
Enquire into the facts which they depos'd.  
God ! what a sight did there present itself !  
With shaggy hair, and with a maniac's look,  
Like one pursu'd by furies, in his cell  
I found the Scotsman, Curle. The wretched man  
Scarce recognis'd me, ere he cast himself  
Prone at my feet—and shrieking held my knees  
In desperation, writhing like a worm.  
He'd borne false witness—and those hapless letters  
To Babington, which he had sworn as genuine  
Were falsify'd. He'd written other words  
Differing from those the Queen had dictated.  
The villain Nau had urg'd him to the deed.\*

\* Shrewsbury's description of Mary's imprisoned Secretaries is curtailed—  
Schiller having been too unsparing in his pathos, which is not well bestowed  
on such subordinate parts.

ELIZABETH.

You said yourself that he was quite distraught—  
A maniac's words prove nothing !

SHREWSBURY.

But this madness  
Bears evidence the strongest. O my Queen,  
Suffer persuasion—be not over hasty—  
Command th' examination be renew'd.

ELIZABETH.

I will do so, because 'tis your request :  
Not that I think the Peers have judg'd amiss.  
Happ'ly 'tis not too late. No shade of doubt  
Should dim the lustre of our Kingly honor.

*Enter*—DAVISON.

ELIZABETH.

*(To him.)*

The sentence, Sir, we left within your hands—  
Where is it ?

DAVISON.

The sentence ?

ELIZABETH.

That I yesterday

Gave you to keep ?

DAVISON.

That you gave me to keep ?

ELIZABETH.

The people 'twas compell'd my signature :  
I must obey their pleasure, and I did so—  
Did so through force, and gave into your hands  
The paper—I intended to gain time :  
You know what I said to you ? Now restore it.

SHREWSBURY.

Pray give it back, Sir. Matters now are chang'd ;  
The investigation will take place anew.

ELIZABETH.

Be not so long considering. Where's the scroll ?

DAVISON.

*(In great consternation.)*

I am undone :—I am a man condemn'd !

ELIZABETH.

*(Interrupting him hastily.)*

I hope, Sir, that—

DAVISON.

O I am lost for ever !

I have't no longer !

ELIZABETH.

How—what ?

SHREWSBURY.

God in Heaven !

DAVISON.

It is in Burleigh's hands since yesterday.

ELIZABETH.

Wretch ! that thou art, and am I thus obey'd ?  
Did I not strongly charge you to retain it ?

DAVISON.

That you did not command, my Sovereign Liege.

ELIZABETH.

Mak'st me a liar, miserable man ?  
When did I bid thee give the scroll to Burleigh ?

DAVISON.

Not in direct and clear expressions, but—

ELIZABETH.

And dars't thou, miscreant, my words interpret,  
And thus imbue them with the bloody sense  
Of thine own mind ? Woe's thee if ought disastrous  
Arise from this self willedness of thine.  
Thy life shall be the forfeit of the deed.  
Lord Shrewsbury you see how much misus'd  
My name hath been !

SHREWSBURY.

I see it. O my God !

ELIZABETH.

How say you ?



SHREWSBURY.

If the Secretary hath  
Ventur'd upon a deed you did not order,  
He must be summoned to the tribunal  
Of the Peers' house, since he hath made your name  
The execration of all future times !

*Enter*—BURLEIGH.

Long may you live and reign, my royal Mistress,  
And may all other enemies of this Isle  
End like this Stuart !

(*Shrewsbury hides his face. Davison wrings his hands.*)

ELIZABETH.

O declare my Lord,  
Did you receive the death warrant from me ?

BURLEIGH.

No, my most gracious Sov'reign, I receiv'd it  
From Davison.

ELIZABETH.

Did Davison then give it  
In my name to you ?

BURLEIGH.

No, that he did not.

ELIZABETH.

And you have executed sentence quickly,

Without enquiring first our royal pleasure ?  
The sentence was a just one : the world cannot  
Condemn us for it, but 'twas not for you  
T' exclude the mercifulness of our heart ;  
Therefore we do exclude you from our presence.  
A rig'rous trial, Sir, awaits your crime,

*(To Davison.)*

Who have o'erstept with rashest haste your duty,  
And faithless been in a most sacred trust.  
Conduct him to the tower. It is my will  
That he be subjected to prosecution.  
My noble Talbot, you alone I've found

*(To Shrewsbury.)*

Amongst my Counsellors, the faithful one !  
Henceforth be my director—be my friend.

SHREWSBURY.

O do not banish from you these true friends—  
—Cast not them into prison, who for you  
Speak by their deeds, and serve you by their silence.  
For me, great Queen, permit that I resign  
Back to your hands the seal your confidence  
Hath trusted to me, for the last twelve years.

ELIZABETH.

Nay, Shrewsbury, 'tis not now the time to go—  
Leave me not now—

SHREWSBURY.

Excuse me, I'm too old—  
My hand, long us'd to justice, is too stubborn  
To place the seal upon your present deeds.

ELIZABETH.

Shall I then be forsaken by the man  
Who sav'd my life?

SHREWSBURY.

I have done but little—  
I have endeavoured to save of you  
The nobler part. Live long—reign happily.  
Your rival's dead—hence forward there is naught  
You have to fear—nor aught more to observe.  
(*Bows coldly, but respectfully, and retires.*)

ELIZABETH.

(To Kent who enters.)

Send for the Earl of Leicester.

KENT.

The Lord Leicester  
Sends his excuse. He's sailing now for France.  
(*Elizabeth makes an effort to restrain her feelings  
and assume composure whilst the curtain drops.*)

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ERRATA.

- Page 8 Line 12, for damn'd read damned.  
— 14 — 31, for was read were.  
— 58 — 9, for treat read treats.  
— 69 — 23, for preferring read preferring.  
— 38 in Note, for desire read Desire.
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